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PAGES 33-36

Budget breakdown

Five things you need to know about Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's 'minibus' budget tabled on Monday PAGE 12

Teen gun charges tossed

A Toronto judge defends dropping charges against a 13-year-old student, citing an improper police strip search PAGE 3

Keepin' it Cool J

On the verge of releasing his first album in five years, LL Cool J weighs in on the brouhaha surrounding the rebel-flag-flaunting Accidental Racist PAGE 18

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

No oversight on firm that made diluted drugs

Cancer-drug scandal. Government regulators took hands-off approach, so company issued own 'stringent quality control'

Both Health Canada and provincial regulators declined to regulate Marchese Hospital Solutions before it started supplying chemotherapy drug mixtures to five hospitals in Ontario and New Brunswick, the company president said on Monday.

"Government authorities have always been fully aware of our presence and the kind of work we do," Marchese Hospital Solutions president Marita Zaffiro told a legislative committee. "MHS has never attempted to operate without regulatory control."

The company went to Health Canada, the Ontario College of Pharmacists and the New Brunswick Pharmaceutical Society to "inquire about the appropriate regulatory approval" before it started sending its products to hospitals, she said.

Her lawyer later clarified that Marchese notified Health Canada in December 2011, after the company won a contract to produce the intravenous drug mixtures.

All three declined to regulate the company, Zaffiro said. So Marchese instituted its own "stringent quality-control measures."

"My understanding was that Health Canada and the colleges were in discussions around looking into this gap and how it was going to be addressed," she said.

Marchese has been under scrutiny since it was discovered that 1,200 patients received watered-down chemotherapy drugs purchased from the company.

Zaffiro said Marchese supplied products that weren't "concentration specific," meaning the company put only a set amount of the drug in each bag, rather than creating a mixture that contained a certain concentration of the drug per millilitre of added saline.

But the hospitals thought they were getting bags of a certain concentrate — which would have been adjusted for the extra saline — and administered it accordingly.

"What we've learned now is that hospitals were using our products in a way that we had no idea," Zaffiro said.

Ontario and Health Canada have acknowledged that there was no oversight of the company and they don't know how many others like Marchese are operating in Canada.

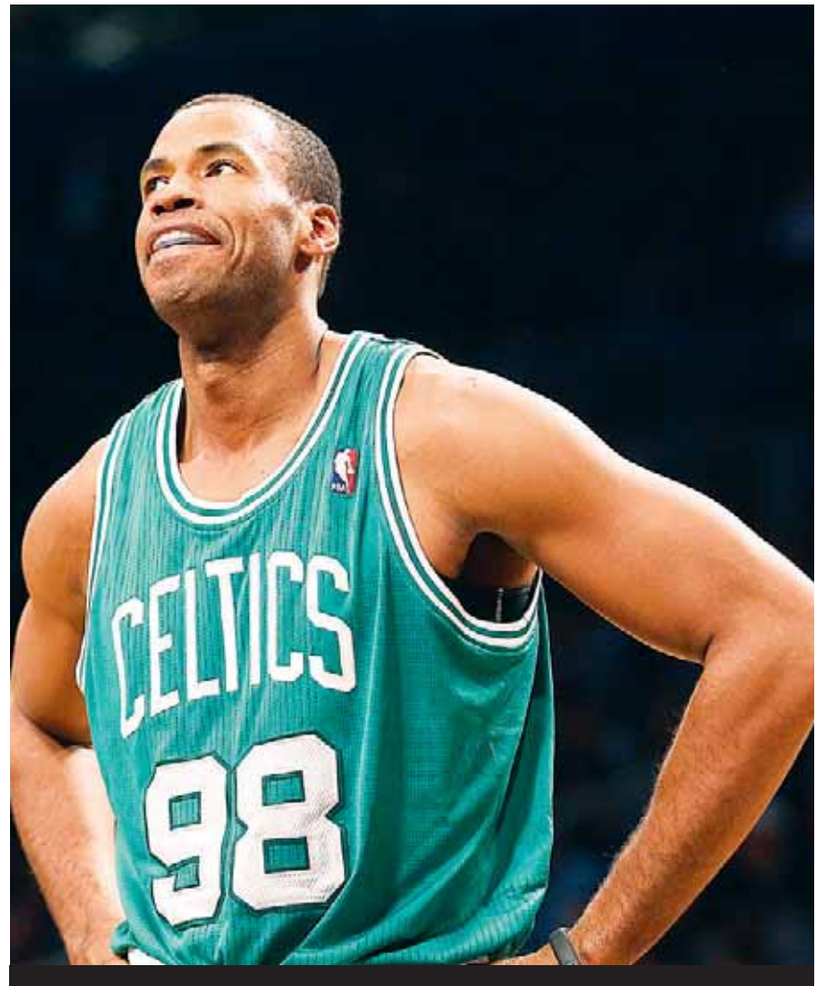
The problem was discovered by a pharmacy technician in a Peterborough, Ont., hospital, which had just switched to Marchese.

Both the federal and provincial governments have taken steps to close the gap until a more permanent solution is found.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A mix-up at the hospitals

- Marchese Hospital Solutions president Marita Zaffiro said the company prepared the drugs the way it was asked to under its contract and under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist. But there was a mix-up with the hospitals.
- In effect, the drug mixture Marchese was producing was different from the one the hospitals thought they were buying, the committee heard.



BREAKING A BARRIER

Jason Collins, a 12-year NBA veteran and current free agent, has become the first active major league athlete to come out as gay. In a first-person account posted Monday on the Sports Illustrated website, Collins wrote: "I'm a 34-year-old NBA centre. I'm black. And I'm gay." Story, page 10.

BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES FILE

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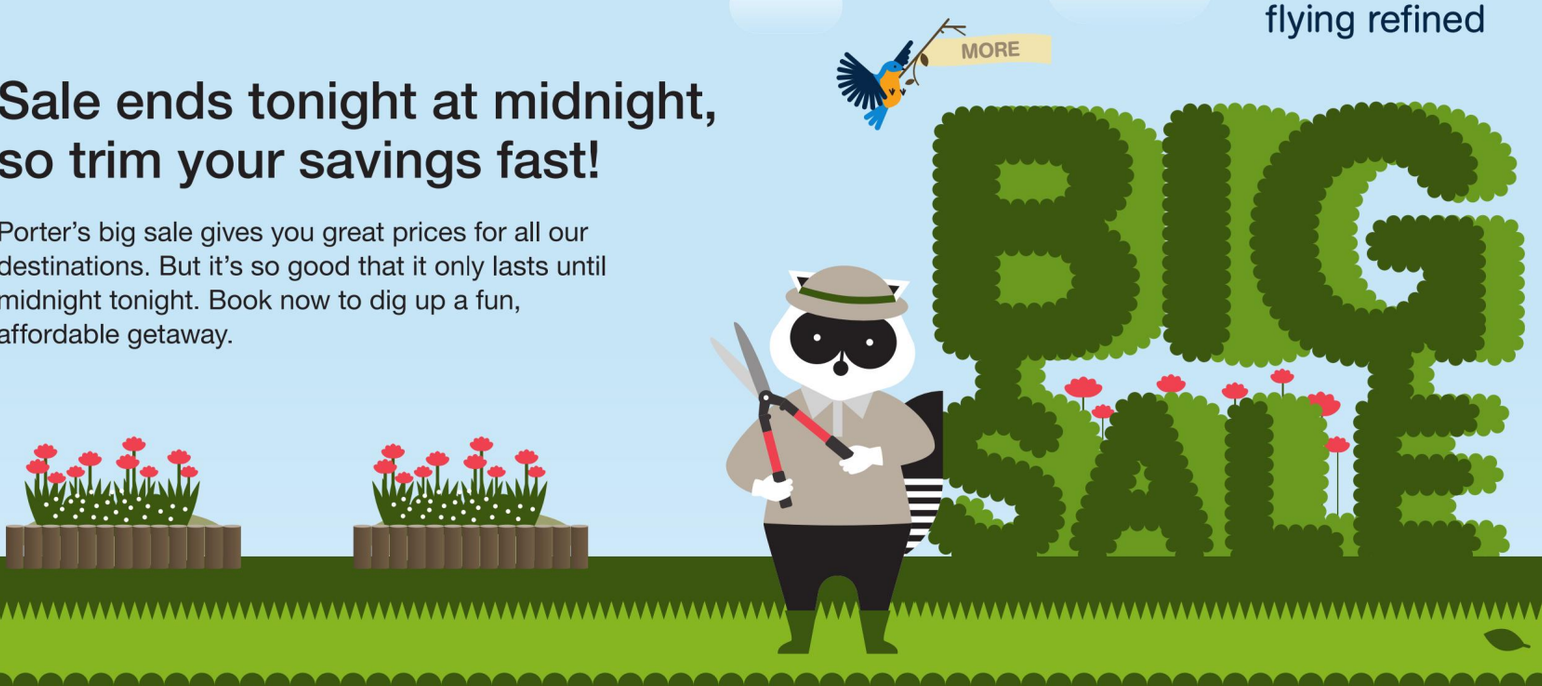

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York University

Ex-coach faces more charges

A former York University football coach who was arrested on charges relating to child pornography faces eight additional charges in the child-luring investigation. Daniel Younis, 24, was first arrested on Feb. 21.

On Monday, police arrested Younis a second time. Police report the suspect allegedly engaged three boys, 16 and 17, through cellphone and Internet chats. Police say that two of the victims were allegedly sexually assaulted on campus and that the accused met the third at a football game in Texas.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

On the menu

Chains to show sodium, calories

Toronto's board of health has voted to urge the provincial government to force restaurant chains to disclose calorie and sodium content of items on the menu. The medical officer of health is proposing the rules apply to chains with 10 or more outlets across Canada or at least $10 million in annual sales.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

School bus drivers

Potential strike may upset parents

School bus drivers for Stock Transportation could walk off the job as early as Wednesday morning at Toronto public and Catholic schools, leaving some 4,200 students to make their own way to school.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Improper strip search. Gun charges for boy, 13, tossed

A 13-year-old boy who allegedly brought a gun and ammunition to his Toronto elementary school won't face a trial after a judge ruled he was improperly strip-searched at the police station. He was 12 at the time.

Ontario Court Judge David Cole stayed the gun possession and assault charges against the boy because he found his charter rights were violated, but not without some stern words for both the boy and police.

There is a "decade-long history" of strip searches by Toronto police sometimes being found unconstitutional, Cole said, citing other decisions.

"With all due respect to the TPS (and perhaps also to the Police Services Board), ... unless the admittedly rather draconian remedy of a stay of proceedings is not imposed, 'state misconduct is likely to continue in the future,'" Cole said, using wording from a Supreme Court of Canada decision.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Trial. Ex-med student says he didn't see sex assault

A former medical student who observed an operation in which a North York General Hospital anesthesiologist allegedly forced a female patient to perform oral sex says he noticed no such assault.

"I did not see anything of concern during that operation," Dr. Ryan Austin testified Monday.

A 42-year-old woman complained to the hospital and police in 2010 that her anesthesiologist, Dr. George Doodnaught, fondled her breasts, kissed her and forced oral sex while she was semi-conscious during an operation.

She testified she said to him, "What about the other people?" to which, he replied, "Don't worry; I know how to be discreet."

Doodnaught, 64, has pleaded not guilty to sexually assaulting 21 different women, age 25 to 75, all but one under surgery at North York General.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

Widow 'shocked' by Kachkar ruling

Mentally ill offender. Man who killed cop with snowplow will be able to enter community

The widow of a police sergeant killed by a mentally ill snowplow thief is calling a decision allowing him escorted visits to Whitby "a slap in the face."

"I am extremely upset and shocked over the decision," Christine Russell, widow of slain Sgt. Ryan Russell, said in her statement.

The Ontario Review Board, which oversees mentally ill offenders, ruled Monday that Richard Kachkar, 46, should be held in a medium security unit at Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences in Whitby.

The board also ruled he should be eligible, at the hospital's discretion, for escorted visits both to the hospital grounds and to the town. Town visits would require police be notified.

The Crown and defence, which made a joint submission Friday at the board's hearing on Kachkar's fate, only asked he be allowed escorted visits to the hospital grounds, not to the town. During the hearing, the board never discussed visits to Whitby, Russell said.

Russell urged the government to appeal the ruling.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Defence reaction

Kachkar's lawyer called the board's decision reasonable and well reasoned in the way it balances public safety with his client's rehabilitation.

- He said Kachkar will only get escorted trips if the hospital determines they are warranted.

Christine Russell, wife of slain police officer Ryan Russell, said a decision allowing him escorted visits to Whitby was "both an insult and a slap in the face to my husband, myself, our family, the police community, the public at large and victims of violent crime." RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

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Samuel Sinclair and Jabulah Murray pose for a photo at the Lawrence Square Shopping Centre on Thursday.
JESSICA SMITH/METRO

New doc sheds a different light on Lawrence Heights

Hope Heights. Youth in one of T.O.'s 'priority' neighbourhoods say news reports aren't always representative

JESSICA SMITH
jessica.smith@metronews.ca

When reporters come to Lawrence Heights, it's not usually to cover good news. And when bad news breaks it can leave the community feeling a little hopeless, according to the makers of a new documentary.

Lawrence Heights, sometimes called "the Jungle," is one of the city's "priority" neighbourhoods and is often in the news because of violence, including the shooting of a 15-year-old boy earlier this month.

The director of Hope Heights, middle-school teacher Robin Phillips, said she decided to make the film to reflect the community that she has come to know through working at an area school. She said the young men that tend to make headlines are far different from the kind, motivated young men she knows from volunteering at a neighbourhood community centre.

For example, there's Jabulah Murray, who connects youth with employment and education services as a program worker with R.E.A.D.Y. (Real Experience and Access Designed for Youth).

He said he feels "taken advantage of" by news coverage. "People just want to write on all the negative stuff. It's depressing at times."

Murray said he'd like the news to not just focus on criminals, but also show the people in the community who are affected by the crimes. He asks reporters to "just see people for people."

Murray hopes the documentary will show some of the positive changes in the community, such as the shift in area youths' perception of education.

"Before it was you dropped out and you were cool and now you see all your peers getting scholarships and if you're not going to school and you're not graduating, you're not the cool person anymore," he said. "It's a change of culture."

Eighteen-year-old Samuel Sinclair said he feels "singled out" when he sees news coverage of crime and violence in his community.

"And I feel like it pushes me toward my goals, to make a difference in society and show them that not all black youth from 'the ghetto' are part of this pattern," he said.

Sinclair, who loves art and fashion and plans to work as a merchandiser or stylist, is heading to college in the fall and then hopes to return to Toronto to study at Ryerson University.

He loves the community, but adds the neighbourhood needs to play a role in changing the headlines.

"I feel like Lawrence Heights needs to change for the news to change. If we're portraying ourselves as bad individuals, how do you expect the news to be any different?" he said. "It has to start here."

The film is being funded through online donations at indiegogo.com/projects/hope-heights.

Quoted

"We're a very positive community, we love the arts. We have a lot of friendships that are built for a lot of years. It's a good, strong community bond that we have."
Jabulah Murray

City staff urge takeover of destitute Bixi bikeshare

City staff want Toronto to take over the embattled Bixi bike-sharing program, according to a confidential report.

The document, which was distributed at a behind-closed-doors meeting of Mayor Rob Ford's executive committee last week, outlines three scenarios for dealing with the financially troubled company.

According to the report, Bixi Toronto informed city staff in November that it was not able to make its loan payments "over the next few months."

If the company defaults, Toronto is on the hook for an outstanding loan of $3.9 million.

To protect the city's interests, staff recommended council allow them to negotiate "an orderly transfer of ownership of the Bixi Toronto program for the purposes of continuing the program." If a deal cannot be reached, staff asked council to "exercise the city's rights in the event of insolvency or to assume ownership" should Bixi default.

A third possibility is to let the company fail. If Bixi went bankrupt, the bikes and docking stations could be sold for $800,000 to $1.2 million.

The report was discussed in secret and it is still unclear what was decided.

The report concludes: "In any scenario, the city will have to assume the $3.9-million capital loan. Therefore, ... the city should act to ensure that the public continues to benefit from that investment."

However, city staff outlined a number of legal hurdles and financial risks if the city attempted to assume ownership after the company moved into default. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Transit tax? Only for a subway: Councillors

Scarborough RT.
Faction hopes Mayor Rob Ford will join them in conditional support

Mayor Rob Ford won't support transit taxes. But if the province imposes them, he might be willing to back a move on council to make a Scarborough subway the first priority for any money that's raised in Toronto.

Scarborough councillors Michael Thompson and Michelle Berardinetti each met with Ford on Monday to solicit his support for a motion they want to put to council next week. It would make their support for new transit taxes contingent on converting the Scarborough RT to a subway.

That would mean abandoning plans for the SRT to be made into an LRT. The subway would cost about $500 million more than the $1.8 billion Queen's Park has committed to the SRT makeover.

Berardinetti said seven of 10 Scarborough councillors have signed on.

It will take a two-thirds vote at next week's meeting to force a debate on the taxes being recommended. That's because Ford's executive committee already voted last week to defer that debate until May 28 — too late to affect Metrolinx's report on the best way to raise money to build transit. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Looking out for No. 1

"If Scarborough is not going to get any benefits from enhanced revenue tools, why would we support it?"
Scarborough Coun. Michael Thompson

Councillors Michael Thompson, left, Michelle Berardinetti, Glenn De Baeremaeker and Gary Crawford hold a 2005 banner — dusted off Monday — calling for a full subway for the Scarborough RT. DAVID RIDER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canada-wide warrant. Toronto couple wanted in kidnapping, jewelry scam

Police say a couple wanted in a Toronto kidnapping scammed several people out of money and jewelry in recent months and may have committed offences from Montreal to Vancouver.

Det. Sgt. Savas Kyriacou says a man and woman have been linked to at least nine incidents in Toronto between May and October of last year, and another earlier this month.

He says the couple typically approaches its target by claiming an illness or asking for directions to a hospital, then offers a fake gold necklace as a reward for assistance.

Kyriacou says one of the suspects then tries to place the necklace around the victim's neck and uses the opportunity to steal real gold jewelry the person is wearing.

In the most recent incident, police allege the suspects pressured a 68-year-old woman into buying a fake gold necklace, then followed her home and intimidated her into giving them more money.

Suspects

A Canada-wide warrant is being sought for Constantine Caldararu and his wife Elisa, both 34.

- The husband is described as white, six feet two inches tall, 350 pounds, with black hair, brown eyes and several tattoos.
- The wife is described as five feet eight inches tall, 250 pounds, with black hair and brown eyes.

Police say the suspects then drove her to a bank to withdraw more cash, which they took — an incident police are calling a kidnapping.

They say the couple drove a rental car between Vancouver and Montreal and may have committed other offences in that time.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

War. U.S. soldier who fled to Toronto to avoid tour in Iraq court-martialled

An American soldier who fled to Canada to avoid a second tour of duty in the Iraq war was being court-martialled Monday.

Kimberly Rivera, 30, has been charged with desertion and faces up to five years in prison and a dishonourable discharge if convicted.

Rivera, now a mother of four, was assigned to Fort Carson's 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Colorado and served in Iraq in 2006. She has said that, while there, she became disillusioned with the U.S. mission in Iraq.

While on a two-week leave in the U.S. in 2007, she crossed the Canadian border after she was ordered to serve another tour in Iraq. She lived in Toronto with her husband and young children.

She applied for permanent residency, but Canadian immigration officials ordered her to leave. THE CANADIAN PRESS

United States Iraq war resister Kimberly Rivera speaks at a press conference in Toronto last summer. AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

Used donor sperm

Mother forced daughter, 14, to get pregnant

A woman desperate for another child forced her 14-year-old daughter to get pregnant using syringes of donor sperm, a British judge said.

In a ruling reported Monday, High Court judge Peter Jackson said the mother had behaved in "a wicked and selfish way." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Turkish hospital

Woman who got womb transplant is 6 weeks along

A hospital says a Turkish woman who became the first person to successfully receive a donor womb is six weeks into a "healthy" pregnancy.

Derya Sert, 22, was born without a womb and had one transplanted in August 2011. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Romantic rivals

Attack of the salad dressing bottle

Police say an 18-year-old woman is facing an assault charge after allegedly attacking a romantic rival with a bottle of salad dressing.

Officers responded Sunday morning to a report of a physical disturbance inside an apartment in Lindsay, Ont. THE CANADIAN PRESS/ CKQM

Sent out to pasture

B.C. Conservative candidate to run as Independent

A recently fired B.C. Conservative candidate has a beef with the party and has found a unique way to both announce he's running as an Independent and strike back at the party leader for firing him.

In a YouTube video, Mischa Popoff appears standing in a fenced pasture and declares that he won't be bullied. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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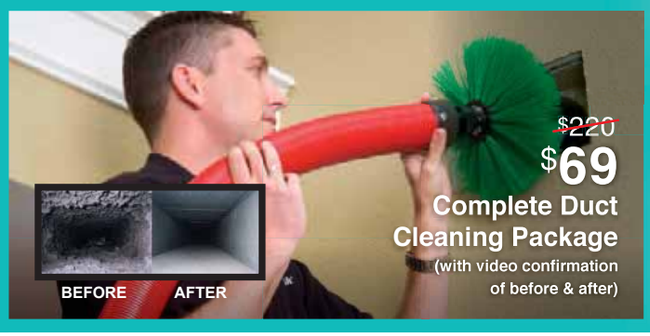

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FANDEMONIUM: LEAFS VS. BOSTON

Hey, these kids are alllll right

Toronto Maple Leafs fans line up at the Air Canada Centre on Monday morning to compete for playoff tickets and the chance to have their photo on the front page of Wednesday's edition of Metro. Hundreds of fans dressed in their best blue and white to show their passion for the Leafs, who play the Boston Bruins Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the first game of their best-of-seven series. The winner and runners-up of the contest organized by Metro and MLSE will be announced Wednesday. Photos at facebook.com/metrotoronto. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

Armchair fans' playoff essentials

The hair

Playoff beards

This is one tradition that doesn't need to be just for men. Why not embrace the underarm beard? If that's not your style, how about putting on a fake beard from an old Halloween costume?

The duds

Jerseys

So what if the Leafs can't see you in your jersey through the TV and couldn't tell and probably wouldn't care if you were watching the game naked? Leafs Nation wasn't built on common sense.

DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

The head

Your superstition

Do you borrow from baseball and put on your rally cap? Do you cross your fingers? Do you take off your socks? Do you eat your special food? Whatever superstition gets you through the tense moments, embrace it.

JESSICA SMITH/METRO

The exercise

Hockey sticks

Between periods, get up off the couch, get outside for a little street hockey and enjoy the game you love. Nothing puts the great circus of the NHL into perspective like shooting a ball around with your friends. Game on!

The drinks

Delicious beer

Delicious beer. What goes better with hockey? Unless you're underage. In which case, how about a pop or a healthy glass of milk?

BELEAF IT OR NOT: GOAL-SONG TIDBITS

Hopping aboard the Harlem bandwagon

This season, the Leafs are using Harlem Shake by Baauer as a goal song — apparently inspired by the viral video phenomenon. The change, which occurred just as the Harlem Shake meme was dying, was met with some derision from sports columnists and fans online.

Going for a Ride

This season, the Leafs have also used Ride the Whip by Trixster and Turbulence by Steve Aoki.

There's really no escaping the zombie invasion

One of the Leafs' best-known goal songs is Kernkraft 400 by Zombie Nation, a German Techno group. The bizarre music video features a band member and bikini-clad women advertising three products on a mock shopping channel: A microwave called the AtomWave400T, a tanning bed called the Sunburst-400SL and a dildo-like device called the Kraft-stick400XL.

Why don't they get own song?

Kernkraft 400 has been used by other teams, including the Boston Bruins. It's only words are "zombie" and "zombie nation."

JESSICA SMITH/METRO WITH FILES FROM TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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*All games available for online streaming. For the complete broadcast schedule and more, visit
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CBC

NBA veteran Collins comes out as gay

Support from players. Kobe Bryant tweeted, 'Don't suffocate who u r because of the ignorance of others'

NBA veteran Jason Collins became the first active male player in the four major American professional sports to come out as gay.

The 34-year-old centre, who has played for six teams in 12 seasons, wrote a first-person account that was posted on Sports Illustrated's website Monday. Collins finished the season with the Washington Wizards and is now a free agent. He says he wants to keep playing.

"If I had my way, someone else would have already done this," he writes. "Nobody has, which is why I'm raising my hand."

Collins played in a Final Four for Stanford and reached two NBA Finals. His twin brother, Jarron, was also a longtime NBA centre. Collins says he told his brother he was gay last summer.

"Jason has been a widely respected player and teammate throughout his career and we are proud he has assumed the leadership mantle on this very important issue," NBA Commissioner David Stern said in a statement.

White House spokesman Jay Carney called the decision courageous and former U.S. President Bill Clinton said it was "an important moment for professional sports and in the history of the LGBT community." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jason Collins is the first active male player in the four major American professional sports to come out as gay. ROBERTO SERRA/IGUANA PRESS/GETTY IMAGES

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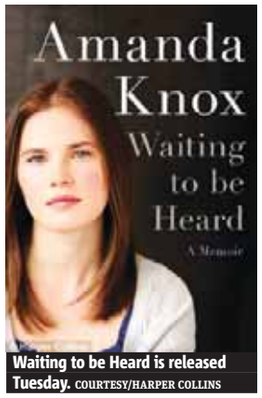
Opportunity Knox. But murder re-trial makes memoir's release a risk

Lesbian trysts and suicide, police corruption and murder — it's easy to see why publishers HarperCollins paid $4 million US for Amanda Knox's memoir from the murder case.

Waiting to Be Heard is being released Tuesday, along with Knox's first TV interview, five and a half years after the murder of British student Meredith Kercher for which she was convicted and then acquitted. But the plans have been rocked by a pending re-trial for her and her alleged accomplice, ex-boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito, after the Italian Supreme Court overturned their acquittal.

Although HarperCollins denies that there are "legal problems" for the book, it may provide ammunition for prosecutors. "Possibly we can find a new element for the trial from the book," Kercher family lawyer Francesco Maresca told Metro.

The victim's family are disgusted that Knox will become a millionaire from the story of Meredith's death, having criticized her acquittal.



Waiting to be Heard is released Tuesday. COURTESY/HARPER COLLINS

Advanced sales for the book have been slower than expected, but if Knox performs well on her TV interview with ABC's Diane Sawyer, it could dramatically improve her prospects. "It could be the springboard for her to become a TV personality and people will forget why she became famous," crisis management PR specialist Glenn Selig told Metro.

KIERON MONKS/METRO WORLD NEWS

Social media

70% admit being regular users, new report finds

One in three Canadians says they don't go a single day without checking into their social media feeds.

It's one of many social networking statistics compiled in a report by the Media Technology Monitor, based on surveys with 4,001 anglophone Canadians. Almost seven in 10 Internet users said they were regular social media users, logging on at least once a month.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Women in locker room

Don Cherry's views are his own, says CBC

Don Cherry isn't speaking for the CBC when he says women have no place in sports locker rooms, the head of media relations for the public broadcaster said Monday.

But Chuck Thompson says the CBC has no plans to discipline him. Thompson was reacting to the continued flak over Cherry's comments Saturday on Hockey Night in Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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From omnibus to 'minibus'

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty tabled a trimmed-down budget bill Monday that he promised would face the proper parliamentary scrutiny. But the official opposition says the legislation still needs to be chopped up. Here are five things you need to know about the changes.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

1 Tories under fire

The Conservatives faced intense criticism over their so-called "omnibus" budget bill last year, which was stuffed with a laundry list of policy measures. The NDP and the Liberals introduced more than 1,000 amendments to register dismay with both the process and the content.

2 Shedding about three-quarters

Flaherty did not acknowledge a link between the criticism last year and the shorter bill this year. This year's legislation comes in at 125 pages, compared with 452 last year.

"So we'll have a minibus instead of an omnibus?" Flaherty joked to reporters after question period Monday.

3 Keeping Canadian jobs for Canadians

After weeks of public outcry over the scarcity of Canadian jobs, changes to the Temporary Foreign Workers program increased the lengths to which employers must go to find Canadian staff before they're allowed to bring in foreign labour.

Employers will no longer have flexibility to set the wages for foreign labour, calling a halt to what was known as the 15 per cent rule, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney told a news conference.

That rule allowed businesses to pay foreign workers up to 15 per cent below median wages, if that's what they were paying Canadians.

The Conservatives are also calling a temporary halt to a program that fast-tracked the ability of some companies to bring in workers from outside Canada through what's known as an accelerated labour market opinion.

4 Trimming down the bureaucracy

Flaherty is also warning of more job cuts in the federal public service.

"We have a lot of duplication of government services. And, as you know, we have a plan which has been set out in the last two budgets to reduce the size of our own spending by something less than five per cent," said Flaherty.

5 Hold the cuts: Budget officer

At the same time, the parliamentary budget officer's latest report is warning that the government's cuts will act as a drag on both job creation and economic growth.

The report predicted the government will announce an even bigger surplus — $3.7 billion rather than $800 million — in the critical 2015-16 year when the Harper government is to face the electorate in a fall vote.

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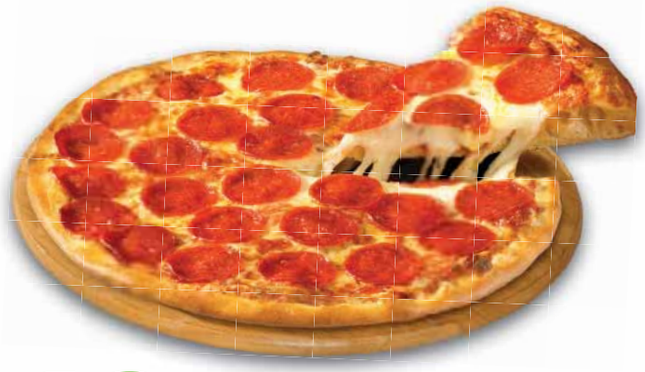

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Canadians buying human organs overseas: Lawyer

Organ trafficking. Wealthy Canadian patients among 24 illegal-kidney-transplant recipients in international case

Ottawa must pass legislation barring Canadians from buying human organs in foreign countries, a Canadian prosecutor who led a landmark case against several traffickers in Kosovo said Monday.

While the commercial trade of human organs is illegal in most countries, there is no law banning Canadians from taking part in so-called transplant tourism, Jonathan Ratel said from Kosovo's capital, Pristina.

"It is not illegal for Canadians to exit their own country and travel abroad to the sub-continent, to Asia, to Africa and to Eastern Europe and purchase organs there on the black market for transplantation and then return home to Canada," he said in a phone interview.

Ratel, who works for the European Union's rule of law mission in Kosovo, brought charges against seven people suspected of running an international organ-trafficking ring that took kidneys from poor donors lured by financial promises.

Raul Fain, a Toronto resident who admitted to purchasing a black-market kidney, was among more than 100 witnesses in the trial. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Shedding light

"Parliament needs to clearly look at legislation banning (Canadians) from ... engaging in what's called transplant tourism."
Canadian prosecutor Jonathan Ratel

EU special prosecutor Jonathan Ratel, a Canadian, at the district court on Monday in Pristina, Kosovo. An EU-led court in Kosovo on Monday sentenced five doctors to up to eight years in prison for illegal organ harvesting and transplants.
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Bangladesh factory. Loblaw to compensate building-collapse victims

The only Canadian retailer to publicly acknowledge it used a manufacturer in a poorly made Bangladeshi building that collapsed and killed hundreds last week said Monday it will pay compensation for the families of victims.

Loblaw Inc. — which had some products for its Joe Fresh clothing line made in one of the garment factories in the building — said it aimed to ensure victims and their families "receive benefits now and in the future."

"We are working to ensure that we will deliver support in the best and most meaningful way possible," company spokeswoman Julija Hunter said.

"Our priorities are helping the victims and their families, and driving change to help prevent similar incidents in the future."

At least 382 people died after the illegally constructed eight-storey Rana Plaza collapsed in Savar, Bangladesh, on Wednesday. About 2,500 survivors have been accounted for.

Loblaw will be compensating families of victims of a collapse at a factory supplying its Joe Fresh products.
GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Loblaw had already said it was working with other retailers to support local efforts and provide aid in Bangladesh. The company was also sending senior officials to Bangladesh to get answers on what caused the collapse.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Labour dispute

Alberta courts plan to run despite strike

The Alberta government went to court late Monday afternoon to ask a judge to find the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees in contempt of court for defying a Saturday labour board ruling that ordered Edmonton Remand Centre guards back to work. The government made the move after provincial sheriffs, court clerks and social workers picketed in Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dismemberment case

Luka Magnotta to stand trial in fall 2014

The trial of accused killer Luka Rocco Magnotta will begin in September 2014, more than two years after his arrest in the death of university student Jun Lin.

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Virtual assistants

Google Now takes on Siri

Google is trying to upstage Siri, the sometimes droll assistant that answers questions and helps people manage their lives on Apple's iPhone and iPad.

The duel began Monday with the release of a free iPhone and iPad app that features Google Now, which performs many of the same functions as Siri.

It's the first time that Google Now has been available on smartphones and tablet computers that aren't running on the latest version of Google's Android software. The technology, which debuted nine months ago, is being included in an upgrade to Google's search application for iOS, the Apple Inc. software that powers the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CBC exec is Twitter-bound

#careermove. Kirstine Stewart to be managing director of Canada at microblogging service

Kirstine Stewart THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

CBC executive Kirstine Stewart is leaving the public broadcaster for Twitter Canada.

The CBC says the English services boss has accepted a position with the San Francisco-based social media company and is leaving CBC/Radio-Canada immediately.

And in a tweet on Monday, Twitter's recently established Canadian division said Stewart will be its new managing director of Canada.

Stewart has been at the public broadcaster for seven years.

The CBC says a recruitment process to find a replacement for the role of executive vice-president of English services will be launched immediately.

Stewart says she's had some of the happiest moments of her life at the CBC and has been "honoured to represent such an important name to Canadians." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Now hiring

- Twitter Canada is also looking to hire an Account Executive and an Account Manager. For details, check out twitter.com/jobs/positions.

Abuzz over bee protections

Protesters dressed as bees gather on Parliament Square Saturday in London, England. On Monday, the European Union announced plans to restrict the use of three neonicotinoid pesticides to better protect dwindling bee populations. The move was cheered by environmentalists, questioned by chemical companies and came after the bloc's 27 nations failed to agree on a common stand. EU Consumer Commissioner Tonio Borg said his agency will override the deadlock and move "in the coming weeks" to restrict the pesticides on plants and cereals that attract bees. DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES

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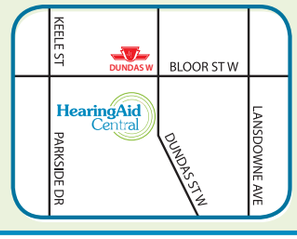

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VOCAL FRYING WITH THE KARDASHIANS

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

Aside from news anchors and a few choice loud talkers on public transit (you know who you are), it seems that most people hate the sound of their own voice.

A common complaint among self-conscious talkers is that the voice inside your head sounds a lot less nasally and annoying than the one other people are hearing in "real life."

You may never really know if your sensual breathy voice actually sounds like a raspy smoker's growl, but that doesn't mean it's not relevant. Like it or not, other people have a habit of making assumptions about attractiveness, intelligence, competency and a variety of other factors based on the sound of your voice.

Researchers at University College London recently conducted a study on human vocal attractiveness in which participants were asked to assess the physical appearance of an unseen speaker based on their speech patterns.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the study proved to uphold some primitive assumptions about heterosexual gender norms. Male participants found high-pitched female voices indicating a smaller body type to be more desirable; the women preferred deep low-pitched male voices signalling a larger and more physically dominant body type.

But while men might instinctually favour female partners with high-pitched voices, many young women have been dipping down the vocal register in recent years and adopting a quirky linguistic trend called vocal fry.

Almost a counterpoint to the rising intonation of Valley Girl up talk, vocal fry is caused by slowly fluttering the vocal cords together to create a low gravelly sound.

This so called "creaky voice" has been popularized by young female celebrities such as Zooey Deschanel and Britney Spears and can be heard among gaggles of teenage girls in Forever 21 fitting rooms across the country.

The Kardashian sisters are especially well known for employing vocal fry to croak out long drawn-out words at the end of their sentences.

Some find this vocal trend grating to the ear, but others argue that women can benefit professionally by purposefully lowering their voices to equalize themselves among male colleagues. New York Times executive editor Jill Abramson is renowned for her distinct guttural vibrato and perhaps it is her low-pitched rattling voice that has helped her become the first female to head the paper in its 160-year history.

When it comes to professional success, the sound of your voice actually matters a lot more than you'd like to think. While studying speeches given by more than 100 business executives, researchers found that the speakers' voice quality accounted for 23 per cent of listeners' evaluations while the actual content of the speech only accounted for 11 per cent.

So next time you open your mouth, remember that it's not necessarily what you say that matters most but how you say it.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

When being a crybaby pays off

SHIZUO KAMBAYASHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No babies were harmed in the making of this contest

It is a sound that fills most parents with dread, but at the annual Naki Sumo — crying baby contest — in Japan, wailing and screeching is encouraged.

Eager mothers bring the children to the event where Sumo wrestlers and high priests coax babies into a state of distress. No physical pain is inflicted on the babies; the sumo wrestlers instead growl and scowl in order to get a wail.

The 400-year-old event, which marks the high point of spring, is held each year at the Sensoji Temple in Tokyo.

If both babies cry, whichever wails loudest wins.
SHIZUO KAMBAYASHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Keeping bad spirits at bay

Participating parents believe the Sumo-induced cries are beneficial. The babies are held high, so that their cries are closer to heaven and their mothers pray for their good health. The ritual is also believed to ward off evil spirits.

EXPRESS.CO.UK

Clickbait

HANNAH ZITNER
hannah.zitner@metronews.ca

With live storytelling nights popping up in droves, raconteurs are getting more chances to share their tales face-to-face. But, for those who'd rather get their stories from the comfort of their duvet, here's a list of good listening you can do without getting out of bed.

Themoth.org:

Arguably one of the longest running story telling events, The Moth has been hosting "story slams" since 1997. Though it started in N.Y.C., it has branched out to cities across North America. But for those who a) don't live in a major urban centre or b) just like to tune-in in PJs, the podcast gives you the best of both worlds.
@TheMoth

Raconteurs.ca:

Originally launched as a Moth event, Toronto-based Raconteurs set out on their own in early 2012. The monthly night of real-life stories has just one stipulation for its performers: No notes. Tune in by visiting their YouTube channel at youtube.com/raconteurstoronto.

StoryCorps.org

One of the biggest oral history projects in the U.S., StoryCorps records conversations between family and friends to "honour lives through listening." Tune in using their iPhone app or straight from the site.
@StoryCorps

Comments

RE: Prof wants to test benefits of nose-picking, published April 24

I think more people do it than we think. And I find it funny that those who don't pick their nose find it so revolting when really it isn't.
Katie, posted to metronews.ca

Well, I'm not sure about nose picking, but I've been biting my fingernails for my whole life, and I have thought about the same thing. Maybe small bits of germs help keep me healthy over time! I almost never get sick ... But I chew on my nails more than is socially acceptable ...
George Denton, posted to metronews.ca

I'll volunteer my kids. They both do it anyway ...
James Ellis, posted to metronews.ca

I hope this professor hasn't applied for and obtained a government grant to do such a study. **NO_MAS_BS, posted to metronews.ca**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: torontoletters@metronews.ca

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SCENE 2

DVD reviews

Silver Linings Playbook

Director. David O. Russell

Stars. Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence, Robert De Niro

●●●●●

David O. Russell's drama of mental health and family discontent steadily becomes a grinner about a dance contest with an outcome worth caring about. Blessed with both Oscar and TIFF wins, it's the best comedy of the past year. It revolves around Pat Solitano (Bradley Cooper), a Philadelphia teacher with anger management issues. He's a regular ray o' sunshine, as long as you don't rile him. He's working on winning back his wife, who left him and now has a restraining order against him. But this strange girl, Tiffany (Oscar-winner Jennifer Lawrence) won't leave him alone. She has mood swings, too, and so does Pat Sr. (Robert De Niro), especially when his beloved Philadelphia Eagles fail on the gridiron. Good thing his devoted wife (Jackie Weaver) keeps him in snacks. Russell has his work cut out for him making sense of this crew, let alone winning our sympathies. But he pulls it off, even if the ending is a little untidy.

Authentic LL Cool J

New album. On the heels of Accidental Racist, veteran rapper talks charts, controversy and always trying to prove himself

LL Cool J says Accidental Racist, his collaboration with Brad Paisley, was misunderstood. GETTY IMAGES

Rap legend LL Cool J is about to release his first album in five years, but he's been in the news lately for an entirely different reason: his controversial Accidental Racist collaboration with white-hatted country star Brad Paisley.

The quirky single was posited as a conversation between Paisley, representing white Southerners, and LL, with Paisley trying to explain the supposedly innocuous intention behind his Confederate flag-branded T-shirt while his New-York-reared counterpart simultaneously tries to understand while also explaining how the symbol makes him feel.

Well-meaning though it was, the song and its race-probing lyrics, including LL's couplet "If you don't judge my do-rag/I won't judge your red flag," touched off a firestorm online — USA Today mused on whether the tune was an "epic fail" while a piece in the Atlantic was headlined Accidental Racist is Actually Just Racist.

Certainly, LL himself noticed the passionate reaction.

"That's the first song that I've ever done that (brought), like, CNN headlines!" the 45-year-old rapper told The Canadian Press in a telephone interview over the weekend with a hearty laugh.

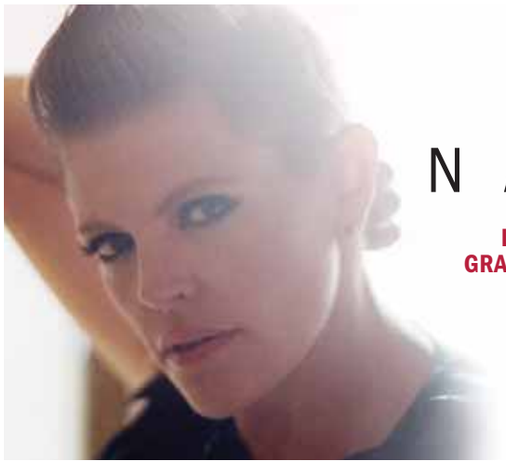
The album features collaborations with artists across all genres — you've got Eddie Van Halen, Bootsy Collins, Seal, Chuck D of Public Enemy, Tom Morello, Travis Barker, Snoop Dogg, Monica and Brad Paisley, among others. What guided those decisions?

I didn't want any boundaries. I wanted to make a limitless record. Working and hosting the Grammys and being around so many types of great musicians, it really just made me realize how I love all types of music. I wanted to make an album that didn't pigeonhole me in one specific area. I didn't want to make an album that was only for a certain type of people or a certain type of stereotype. I wanted to make an album that music fans would love.

Your song with Brad Paisley, Accidental Racist, prompted some really strong reaction, much of it negative. Did you pay attention to it, and what did you make of the response?

Yeah, I paid attention to it. I thought, obviously at the extreme ends of the spectrum, people totally missed the point and just drew the wrong conclusion. I think people in the centre got it and it created a conversation, and caused people to think about that issue. And I think that's a healthy thing for America. I think that it shook up some bruised blood and got people to have a conversation. ... So I have to say man, I think we did our job as artists. It's like the '60s, man. When people made songs, they had to matter. ... I can't guarantee all songs are going to have that kind of whirlwind effect, but it's nice to do something that matters. I'm grateful.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Jim James hears the Sound of God

Solo debut. An old wordless book inspired My Morning Jacket frontman to embark on his solo project

NOLAN GAWRON
Metro World News in New York

Jim James GETTY IMAGES

While My Morning Jacket take a short break from recording and touring, founder and lead singer Jim James continues to surprise his listeners with the drastic sonic departure of his recently released solo debut, Regions of Light and Sound of God.

We spoke with James shortly before last month's SXSW Music Conference in Austin, Texas, but we had to enlist him for another conversation after taking in his performance.

While James has been known to step onstage for a solo set or collaborate under the moniker Yim Yames, this project marks his first official solo record. With Regions, he has produced an epic collection of songs that seem as though divine intervention and production value have led the songwriter to explore new and sacred soil.

"A couple of these songs had a few seeds that had been milling around for a few years," says James.

"Then I got this book called God's Man by Lynd Ward that really inspired the songs to change shape. I almost became hypnotized by it and songs just started coming out of that. The best way I can describe it was more like scoring a film and less like writing an album. It brought the record into focus."

Published in 1929 and credited as America's first wordless novel, God's Man is comprised of 139 woodcuts transferred to paper, telling the story of an artist and his struggle to free himself from the bonds of the business world.

"The cool thing about the book," says James, is that "it's from 1929, but it's so fresh. There's something about that art deco movement that survives with a timeless quality. It still has this power. I realized I wanted to build a sound upon that which was modern, but was still old and crackly at the same time. I wanted it to be the sound of future past — like I made it to sound like the year 4000, but I made it in the year 3990."

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Dreams can come true for background singers

Devotion. After cheering on success of friends Adele and Florence Welch, Jessie Ware realized her own musical dreams

When Jessie Ware worked as a journalist, she watched friends like Adele and Florence Welch rise to the top of the music charts. But Ware was happy for their success, though she'd lost track of her own dream of recording music.

"I just forgot about it," the 28-year-old said. "They were all doing it. And I was like, 'Good for them 'cause they are doing it and they are great' ... and I just didn't think I could do that. I didn't think I had the guts or the talent to do it."

Superstar

"I definitely feel like Ashanti. I feel like Aaliyah."

Jessie Ware, on having 'hottest rapper' A$AP Rocky appear on her album

Then singer-songwriter Jack Penate, a friend of Ware's, invited her to sing background for a radio session. She began singing background at various festivals, on a tour in Europe and then a tour in the U.S.

Ware said she's confident now, and has a career as a singer to thank for that. She released her debut, Devotion, last August. "It's a bit of everything," she explained of her sound. "I got kind of greedy and I tried to put everything in there from folk to pop to soul, hip hop." Ware is part of a growing electronic soul movement that includes acts like Rhye and Quadron, who were cheered on by Ware at a recent showcase in New York.

Ware met Adele through Penate and went to high school with Welch of Florence + the Machine, who has been checking in on her friend.

"She's been texting me like, 'How are you? Where are you in the world?'" Ware said. "She's been really good to me."

Ware wrapped up a short U.S. tour last month and performed both weekends at the Coachella music festival.

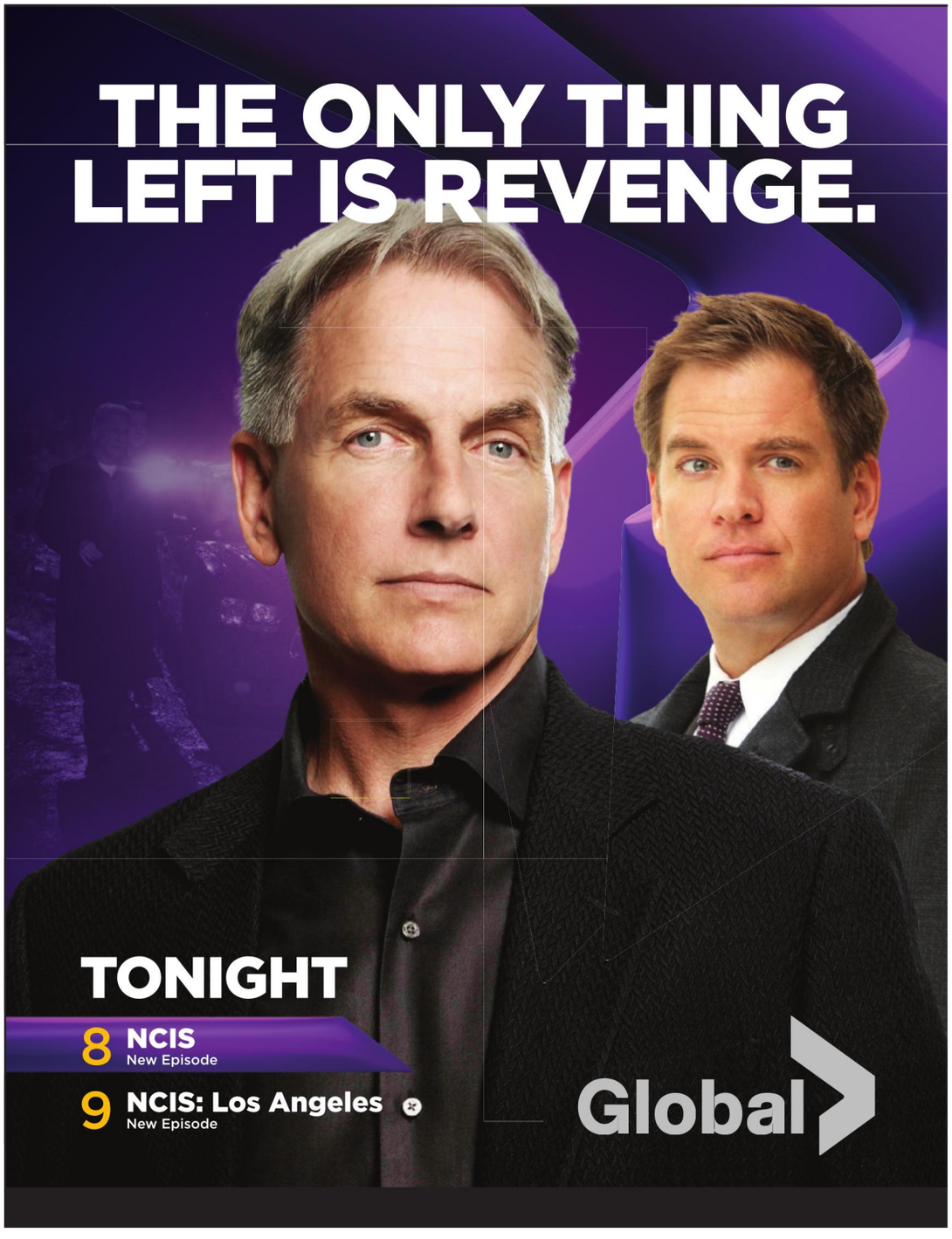
"I remember we started our run in January in Boston. First night I got flowers, I got roses," she said. "I got gay men voguing at the front. It was great. Guys singing to me like, 'Girl!'"

Ware is getting a boost in the U.S., thanks to her collaboration with rapper A$AP Rocky, who appears on the remix to her song Wildest Moments.

"For me, a white girl from South London, to have the hottest rapper on my album, dreams can come true," she said. "I definitely feel like Ashanti. I feel like Aaliyah."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jessie Ware performs during the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival at the Empire Polo Club on April 14 in Indio, California. KARL WALTER/GETTY IMAGES

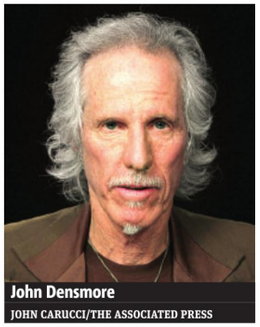


Keeping the fire lit. Doors drummer opens up about Jim Morrison in new book

Former Doors drummer John Densmore keeps the spirit of Jim Morrison alive in his new book, The Doors Unhinged: Jim Morrison's Legacy Goes on Trial.

The new book defends Morrison's stand against commercializing the band's music catalogue.

Recently, Densmore talked about Morrison's intentions, struggles and gift to the music world.



John Densmore
JOHN CARUCCI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

What are you trying to tell people in this new book?
Jim had an uncompromising spirit that he cared about the catalogue. "Come on Buick, light my fire" was something he said he would not do, and would smash a car on television to make (his) point. It's something I cannot forget.

Did you see Jim Morrison spiralling out of control?
Jim succumbed to alcoholism, the legal drug ... I'm wondering if today, (people) like Eminem, who is this angry, creative guy, can put out an album called Recovery, maybe Jim could have done the same.

What was special about seeing the Doors perform live?
It was dynamic. ... We'd play Light My Fire, and everybody would be dancing. Then we'd play The End, and everybody would file out, quietly.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Lopez looking to the future as Idol return talks begin

It turns out that it was Jennifer Lopez herself who initiated the talks last week for her to possibly return to American Idol, replacing her replacement, Mariah Carey, according to Radar Online. "J.Lo had her manager, Benny Medina, approach Fox to alert them of her interest in rejoining Idol," a source says. "(Her) twins will enter kindergarten in the fall, and stability is important for them — and J.Lo — at this time. She's looking for possible schools for the kids in Los Angeles at the moment." But the source is quick to point out that it was never Lopez's idea that she be swapped in for Carey this season as a fix for flagging ratings — a plan that was reportedly pursued and then scuttled when Carey's camp threatened legal action. Lopez was only looking to return next year. "If there was a 'secret plot' to replace Mariah, as has been suggested, then it was all Fox," the source says. "J.Lo's approach was about the future, not the present. She's talking about next season." Carey's contract only covers one season of the reality competition.

Are Depp and Rum Diary co-star Heard back on?

Johnny Depp. ALL PHOTOS GETTY

It looks like Johnny Depp and his Rum Diary co-star Amber Heard are back together, as the rumoured couple was spotted hand-in-hand at the Rolling Stones' surprise concert at a small Los Angeles club over the weekend, according to E! News. Depp and Heard were rumoured to be dating shortly after Depp's split with his girlfriend of 14 years, Vanessa Paradis, though reps for both parties have refused to comment on the relationship.

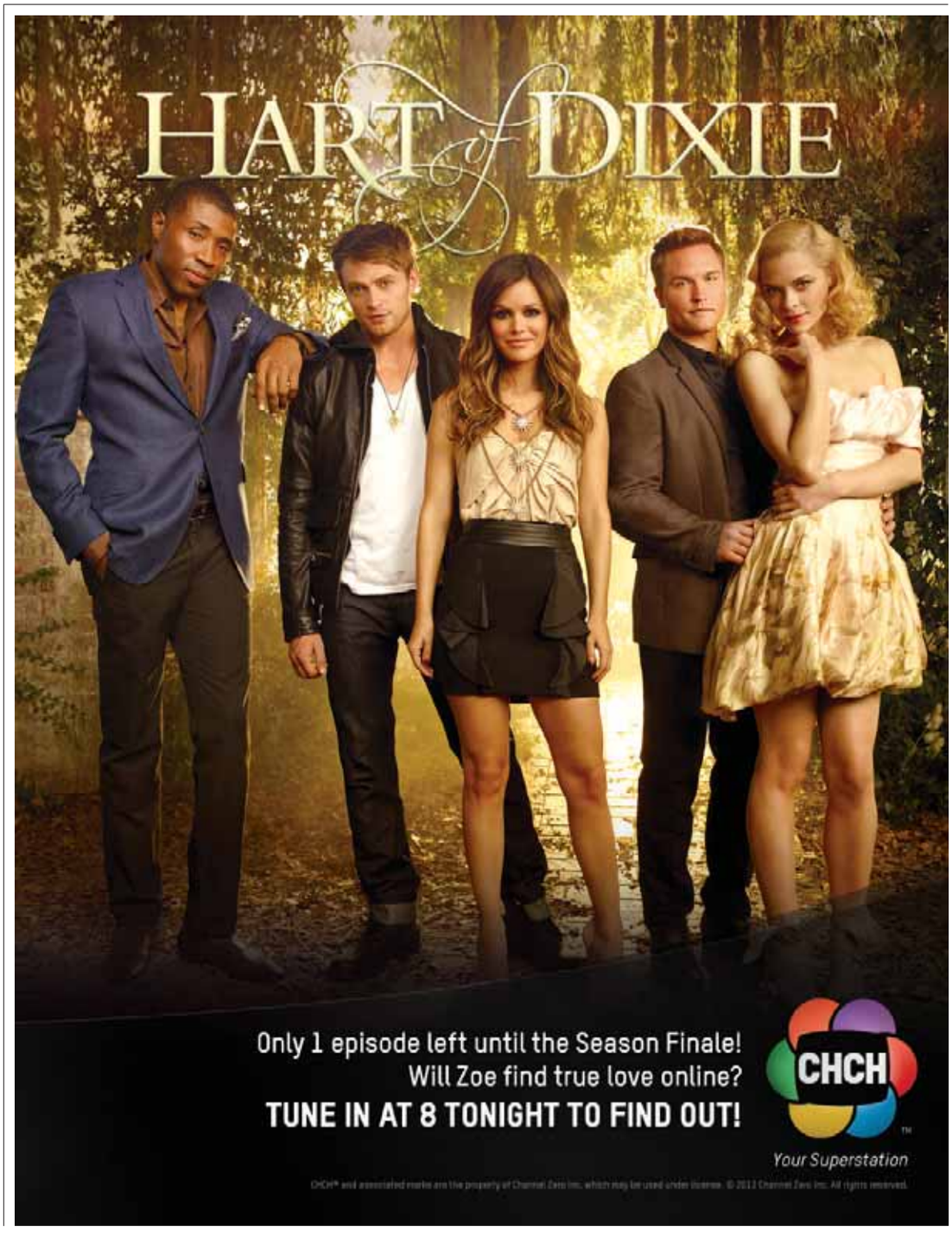
Twitter

@MARLONWAYANS

I feel bad for every chick over 25 in a club ..... Get out of there!!!

@MissKellyO

If there was an award for a twitter member with the worst spelling/typos i would win it!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How yoga can help your run

Fitness. Running isn't just about speed, and this yoga sequence won't make you run faster, but better

ROMINA McGUINNESS
life@metronews.ca

Use your yoga to make you a more complete runner. HANDOUT PHOTO

This is what happens to your body when you run

Running is great cardio, but it's not very well rounded, warns Laura Denham-Jones, who teaches a runner's yoga class at London's top health centre, Triyoga.

"As an exercise that requires you to do a repetitive motion, over and over, some muscles are used more than others. The problem, in the long-term, is that if you have some imbalance in the body, like a weak or tight side or a twist in your pelvis, then you're repeatedly doing that same 'out of synch' motion, which will make things worse. Things like your hips and your hamstrings will get tight," she explains.

While it's not so bad to have some tightness in muscles that are supposed to be strong, you'll need to balance out all the work they do.

Why? To prevent injury, warns Denham-Jones.

"If things get too tight, and you then try and do something like increase your stride, you risk to pull your hamstrings. And it's amazing how reluctant runners can be to take time off from their training when they're hurt."

No, yoga will not make you run faster. If that's what you're after, train harder. But what it does offer is injury prevention through stretching and strengthening the body.

"Recovery is crucial; no one should be training hard seven days a week. Yoga, being a practice that helps to decompress the muscles, will draw attention to any quirks in your body. Restoring muscles back to their original length will enable runners to keep their range of motion and strengthen their body," she adds.

Learning to let go of your ego and toes

Yoga is about respecting the body and not being too egotistical.

"It creates a body awareness whereby, when you notice when something is painful, instead of pushing through in a macho kind of way, you learn to take things easy so that you can nip any injuries in the bud, before they blow up. Another benefit is that, as yoga is done bare foot, you can't rely on shoes to support your ankle and so your muscles are doing all the work and they'll inevitably get stronger. You're also stretching the tendons and increasing, suppleness through the foot," says Denham-Jones.

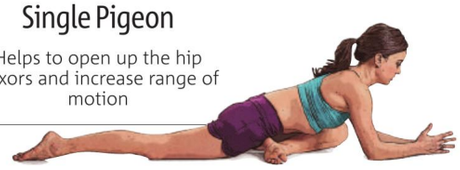
TENSION RELEASING SEQUENCE

Elongate your muscles, lengthen your stride and increase your range of motion

KATHRYN BUDIG, AUTHOR OF THE WOMEN'S HEALTH BIG BOOK OF YOGA

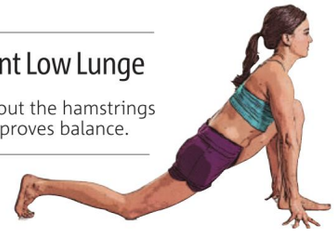
Single Pigeon

Helps to open up the hip flexors and increase range of motion



Crescent Low Lunge

Stretches out the hamstrings and improves balance.



Reclined Big Toe III (with strap)

Stretches the hamstrings, hips, calves and thighs.

Seated Forward Fold (with strap)

Stretches the shoulders, spine and the hamstrings

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BEST HEALTH MINUTE
Bonnie Munday
Editor-in-chief
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Looking good never looked so dangerous. ISTOCK PHOTOS

The Canadian Dermatology Association's second annual Melanoma Monday is set for next week.

The goal is to raise awareness about melanoma — the eighth most common cancer in Canada.

Young people are especially at risk when they use tanning beds.

Research has found that use of indoor tanning equipment before age 35 increases their risk of getting melanoma by 75 per cent. In fact, the World Health Organization puts indoor tanning in its highest cancer risk category alongside substances such as tobacco and arsenic.

When Best Health magazine launched in 2008, few people were talking about the dangers of tanning beds, but legislation banning use of tanning beds by youths is falling into place across the country.

Regulation is up to individual provinces, and so far Quebec, Newfoundland & Labrador and Nova Scotia restrict teen use of the equipment. Legislation is underway in other provinces, too.

Safer ways to get your glow on include use of cosmetic bronzers and self-tanning creams. If you're in the sun, put on a sunscreen with at least 30 SPF, and reapply it frequently. Or better still, cover up with clothing and a wide-brimmed hat. For more on this and other health and beauty topics, pick up a copy of the latest issue of Best Health, on newsstands now.

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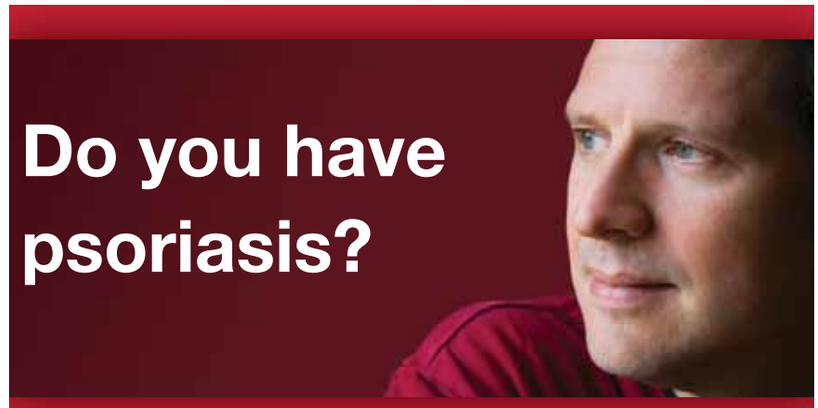

Psoriasis is a life-long skin disease with no known cure. It usually appears as dry, red, scaly patches on the skin. It can make the skin itch, burn, flake or bleed. **DermEdge Research** is conducting a research study of an investigational medication for psoriasis.

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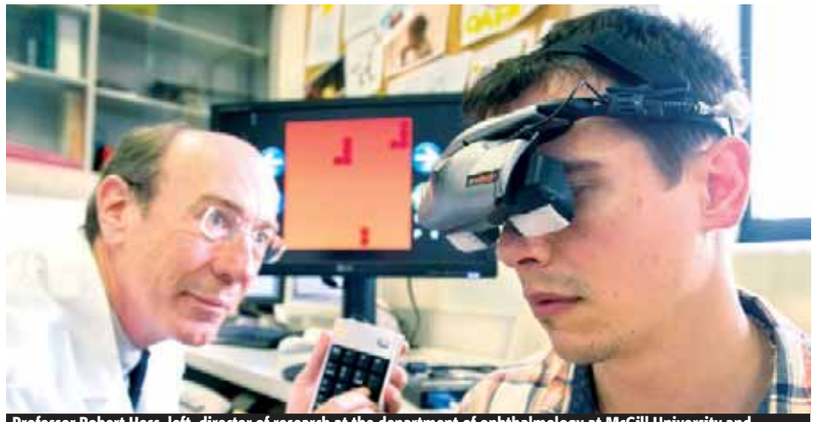
Treating a lazy eye? Research may point to a game of Tetris

Science. Device would make the weak eye do all the visual work in the hope of strengthening it and correcting affliction



Professor Robert Hess, left, director of research at the department of ophthalmology at McGill University and Dr. Simon Clavagnier, a McGill vision research associate, demonstrate the effect of wearing goggles while playing the game Tetris has on a lazy eye. GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Patching has long been used to treat a lazy eye in children, although the therapy has limited success and doesn't work at all in adults with the condition formally known as amblyopia.

Now researchers at McGill University in Montreal are testing an innovative means of improving visual function in adults with lazy eye — a puzzle video game that forces both eyes to work together to overcome the common condition.

In a study published Monday in the journal Current Biology, the researchers compared the use of the online video game Tetris with patching, a treatment in which the "good" eye is covered for a lengthy period of time. The idea is to make the weak eye do all the visual work in the hope of strengthening its acuity.

The patients treated using Tetris showed a four-fold improvement in vision in their lazy eye compared with those who were patched, said ophthalmologist Dr. Robert Hess, director of vision research at the McGill University Health Centre and principal investigator of the study.

Tetris is an early video game that involves manipulating shapes made of small squares — moving them side-to-side or rotating them — as they fall to the bottom of a background grid of same-sized squares. The goal is to connect different shaped blocks, putting them together in an integrated whole before they fall to the bottom.

"The game itself is sort of incidental in a way," Hess explained Monday from Montreal. "It just provides us with a platform to administer this training that we need to do in a way that's enjoyable.

"The game itself is not so important as the principle behind how we manipulate the game to do some good."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Common affliction

About three to four per cent of the population develops a lazy eye in very early childhood, making it the most common cause of vision problems in children

- **The science behind it.** A lazy eye, which is unable to see details in sharp focus, has a number of causes, including having misaligned eyes (being cross-eyed) or having a congenital cataract that clouds the lens. The eye itself is usually otherwise normal, as is the optic nerve that transfers visual information to the brain.

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Before you get dirty, clean up your act

Mud runs. You don't have to change your workout before race day, but a few simple adjustments can help

MEREDITH ENGEL
life@metronews.ca

If spending the day crawling through mud pits, traversing water and leaping over fire sounds like a lot more fun than an hour at the gym, you're not alone — obstacle races are all the rage. Planning to unleash your inner warrior at a mud run this season? Check out these tips for attacking the course like a boss.

Getting dirty never looked so good. ISTOCK PHOTOS

As soon as you sign up

Start training
You don't have to change your whole workout routine, says James Villepigue, CSCS, the author of Obstacle Race Training Bible. But you do want to "think about what you're gonna be doing on the course," he says.

On top of metabolic resistance training — switching between resistance-training and cardio moves that you probably already do — Villepigue recommends functional training, in which you mimic the moves you'll do on race day.

Get your diet in order
"I suggest incorporating lean protein, calcium-rich foods and vegetables in your diet as soon as possible," says dietician Anita Mirchandani, founder of FitMapped.com. "I never like to say 'remove' or 'eliminate,' but try to avoid eating high-fat triggers such as pizza, burgers, fries and sweets."

Post-race

What to do when your run is done.

- **Fuel yourself.** "First, hydrate," Mirchandani says. "Then, a medium piece of fruit is always good to consume soon after. After 60 minutes, a protein-rich snack is ideal."
- **Website.** To find a mud run near you, visit mudrunguide.com

The day before

Take it easy
If you've been training on the regular, your "body, muscles and cardiovascular have been stimulated sufficiently," Villepigue says. "Taking a day off before a race will allow you get the necessary rest that allows muscles to be completely fueled and ready to work."

The morning of the race

Don't stretch!
"You're basically telling the muscles to rest," Villepigue says.

"A dynamic warm-up is key to prepare the muscles for what's about to happen."

Try jumping jacks, high-knee kicks or a short jog.

"One of the most common reasons why people get injured before any type of endurance activity is because they are not properly warmed up," says Mike Silverman, a physical therapist at NYC's Hospital for Special Surgery's James M. Benson Sports Rehabilitation Center.

Don't try anything new
"Try not to introduce anything on race day that you haven't already tried before," Mirchandani recommends. "For example, don't take energy gels on race day if your body isn't used to them."

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Take the difficulty out of scalloped potatoes in 6 steps

MAIJA MOMENTS
YummyMummyClub.ca

Scalloped potatoes are among my favourite kind of potatoes and are the best starchy side dish to ham.

While I admit this side dish typically takes a bit more effort than your typical Canned Soup Mom recipe, I promise this is a simplified version. And because these potatoes always taste better the next day, you can make them the night before.

1. Wash, peel and thinly slice potatoes.

2. Butter 9 x 13 casserole dish. Layer 1/3 potatoes, 1/3 butter, 1 tbsp flour and 1/3 cheese. Repeat (potatoes, butter, flour, cheese).

3. Follow with final layer of potatoes and top with remaining 1/3 butter.

4. In a bowl, mix 2% milk, coarse salt and dried mustard or paprika, and pour over top of potatoes.

5. Cover with tin foil and bake in preheated 350 F oven for 1 – 1 1/2 hours until potatoes are soft and bubbly. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and bake uncovered for another 15 - 20 minutes.

6. Serve with your favourite entree.

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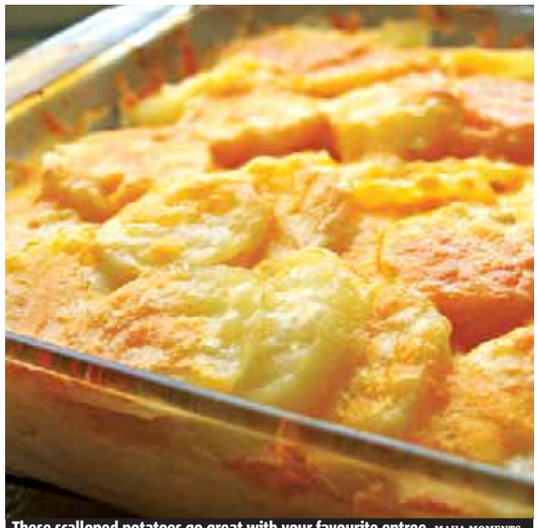

These scalloped potatoes go great with your favourite entree. MAIJA MOMENTS OF YUMMYMUMMYCLUB.CA

Ingredients

- 8-10 medium potatoes (Russet or Yukon Gold are best)
- 1/4 cup cold butter, cut into small squares
- 2 tbsp flour
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided (old or medium cheddar is best)
- 2 cups 2% milk
- 1 tsp coarse salt
- 1 tsp dried mustard or paprika

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Which letter in the alphabet should there be more of? Morels!

Sorry.

Spring marks the big thaw and the sprouting of luscious things from the earth. Morels come from spores that are carried on the roots of trees and they require loamy, moist soil that is in shade.

Morels tend to come early as they only need a low (50 F) temperature to grow. Once they get started, it is only an eight to 10 day period before they are ready. Hunters and shroomers know what to look for to gather them in the wild, but the novice needs to depend upon farmers markets and grocery stores.

All mushrooms contain trace minerals that fill in the gaps the rest of your diet leaves. Morels serve up vitamin D, copper and iron.

By far the best way to cook them is in a cast iron skillet that has been heated to very high heat. Well rinsed and dried on paper towel, the mushrooms can be added whole after a knob of butter has melted.

Do not crowd the pan. Be sure to let the morels brown rather than steam as they do if they are too close together and the water can't escape.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Christa Parravani used some of her sister's writing she found in a Tupperware container, in her memoir Her.
HANDOUT

With or without Her

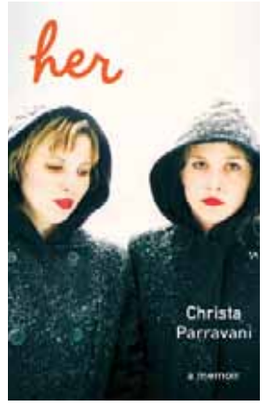
Christa Parravani. In her attempts to understand her twin sister's downward spiral, the author follows in her footsteps, losing her marriage and nearly her life

ALISON BOWEN
Metro World News in New York City

In the gripping memoir Her, Christa Parravani describes what it was like to grow up alongside — then lose to a drug overdose — her identical twin.

And she begins with a startling statistic: After a twin dies, the surviving twin's life is immediately at risk.

In her attempts to understand her sister's downward spiral (which starts by eating one of her pills, found wedged in a crack on the kitchen floor) she follows



in her footsteps, losing her marriage and nearly her life.

She told Metro about using the book as a way to crawl out of that space — to pen the memoir, she incorporated some of her sister's writings, found under her bed in a Tupperware container.

How did you decide when to use Cara's writings?

When something would get really difficult for me — it felt too emotional or I'd gotten to a place where I felt like I couldn't go on because I was exhausted, I was sad or I just kind of plain missed her — I thought, here's the moment to allow Cara into the book.

In the beginning of writing, she was appearing a lot. As time went on and I got more confident in my abilities as a writer and I got further from the grief, I found I needed to rely on her less and less.

Did you make a decision to be so unflinchingly honest?

I wrote the book as if no one would ever read it. It was sort of a love letter to my sister. It was a way to tell her that I loved her and not to be forgotten. In order to write a book that tells truths that are necessary, you have to forget about embarrassing yourself.

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Everyone Makes a Mark

Be socially conscious and look good doing it

The tragic collapse of a Bangladeshi garment factory, which has claimed more than 350 lives, has brought renewed focus to the manufacturing practices of brands that sell affordable goods for mass consumption. While low-priced garments may prove alluring, there has been a growing movement among many to be more mindful in their buying habits. Dara O'Rourke, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and the co-founder of GoodGuide, an online resource that provides information about the health, environmental and social performance of companies, gives his advice. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Get educated

In its online resource Shopping for Change, World Vision Canada offers suggestions for places consumers can consult such as GoodGuide and Fairtrade Canada to find out more about companies and their practices, said Cheryl Hotchkiss, senior manager of advocacy and public engagement. But the education process doesn't end there.

"I think if you're a consumer of a product and you want to find out more information about that product, it's really best for you to be directly in touch with the company that made the product," said Hotchkiss, who is also manager of World Vision's End Child Slavery campaign.

Hold companies accountable

O'Rourke said the big challenge for consumers is to go beyond the information on tags and ask retailers and brands to disclose where products are made, including details on factories and subcontractors.

"We really can't in this day and age, in 2013, we can't have the situation where high-tech, super-smart, global multinational brands and retailers literally don't know where their products are being manufactured. That's just not acceptable."

Beyond making inquiries in stores, consumers should also use public forums to ask questions about company practices, he added.

Shop local

Even if a garment says it's manufactured in Canada, the components of the item could come from elsewhere, said Brenna Donoghue, president of marketing for Ethical Ocean, a Toronto-based online marketplace for fairly traded, organic and eco-friendly products.

"The tricky thing is when you're shopping in really big stores, getting that information is quite hard," she said. "You can obviously find out the country that manufactured it on the label, but finding out where the components came from is often not knowledge that the staff has.

Check certifications

Donoghue said while buying clothing, she tries to seek out garments made of fabrics like organic cotton — and not just because it's environmentally friendly.

"I know that the workers that are growing that cotton in the first place aren't being exposed to really atrocious chemicals, and often, when something is organic it also comes fair trade," she said.

"The great thing about that combination is that you know that the company is paying fairly for those items, and as well, you can trust that it's not filled with chemicals that will make you sick."

Buy secondhand

... or be prepared to possibly spend more. Donoghue said there are many ways to make inexpensive purchases when it comes to socially responsible shopping.

"It can be really cheap to go and buy a pair of jeans at Walmart or any big-box store like that. Similarly, you can go down the street to a thrift store and buy a pair of jeans even cheaper," she said. "You're helping the environment by doing so, and that can actually save you quite a bit of money."

Alison on money

Lessons from Boston and Texas

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

The recent tragedies in Boston and in West, Texas, are reminders that disaster can hit with the speed and force of a tornado.

Similar, if somewhat less dramatic, events happen daily and range from death, divorce and illness to unemployment and acts of God. What these incidents have in common is that they're rarely predictable and usually have financial repercussions.

In light of the two U.S. catastrophes, this might be a good time for readers to take a hard look at their lives. Ask yourself what you appreciate about yours and what you can do to improve things. This isn't about a total makeover, more a gentle review.

Consider the following:

1. Your abode
What do you like about where you live? Can you improve your quarters? It could be something as simple as a bit of paint, hanging a print on the wall or getting a few cheerful plants. If costs are crushing you perhaps there is an alternative — consider what it might be.

2. Your job
Do you feel stuck? What aspects are rewarding? If you don't like what you do, are there ways to change it to increase your satisfaction, even if it means less money?

3. Your commute
I love walking down the hall to work! You might not be so lucky, but for some commuting is actually a source of down time. If you enjoy a few hours of reading the paper on the train or listening to music in your car, remind yourself that this is a positive aspect of each day.

4. Life outside work
Do you have one? Is there something that feeds your soul and is unrelated to life's many obligations? It doesn't have to be expensive. Small pleasures are often the sweetest.

5. Spend on what you love
Try to eliminate anything that doesn't reward you. We shell out huge amounts in mindless haste. Slow down and ask yourself if spending that dollar really enhances your life.

Witnessing tragedies as happened in Boston and Texas is a reminder of our fragility. Examining how we spend and live gives us control over and appreciation of whatever years are available.

Contact Alison at griffiths.alison@gmail.com or alisongriffiths.ca

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Using your cellphone to put the 'app' into your application

Mobile job market.
Sites like Monster, CareerBuilder make it easy to browse, apply for positions right from your phone

JULIA WEST
Metro World News in New York

Mobile job-search apps are popping up all over. Sites like Monster and CareerBuilder offer ways for you to browse postings, update your status and apply right from your phone. But is all this technology making job searches easier?

According to Luis Salazar, co-founder and CEO of Jobaline, more apps mean a greater chance at a job for many hourly workers. "The hourly workers, which are 59 per cent of our economy, are especially left behind," says Salazar.

"These important workers often either lack Internet access or only access the web using mobile phones. When we bridge the gap by providing mobile recruitment tools that address job search needs, workers and employers alike will have the ability to find a better fit."

Companies need to focus on keeping apps concise and user-friendly. "A well-designed mobile recruitment system can reduce the amount of time and effort necessary for a candidate to apply, leading to higher application rates and fewer orphaned applications," explains Mahe Bayireddy, CEO of iMomentous, a mobile talent recruiter. "By integrating with DropBox, Google Drive and social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, applying for a job through mobile can be simple. Forms that once took upward of 20 minutes to complete can be automatically pulled from existing profiles."

Like with so many technological advances, if you're not keeping up with the times, you're falling behind. "Five years from now, it's impossible for us to imagine a world where most job searches and applications will not happen through a mobile device," says Proven CEO Pablo Fuentes. Proven is a job search app that lets users send resumés to job sites. "Today, people are doing banking, travel and taxes on their phone. Tomorrow, mobile will be the standard for job searches."

Job search sites like Monster and CareerBuilder offer apps that let you to browse postings, update your status and apply right from your mobile phone. ISTOCK

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Who knew that a few extra clicks could label you 'the perfect candidate'? ISTOCK

I was matched to this job by a machine?

Aggregator agitation. An applicant tracking system may be rushing through your resumé, but there are ways to slow the system down

JANE BORDEN
Metro World News in New York

The job application process is shifting due to applicant tracking systems, which are online resumé aggregators that many non-profit and corporate entities are using to weed through candidates. Trudy Steinfeld, assistant vice president and executive director of the NYU Wasserman Center for Career Development, helps you navigate the new system:

Talk to the robots (mostly)

Do: Maximize keyword searching

"Say they're looking for a candidate who's detailed, can communicate and is a good editor," Steinfeld says. "When they get resumés, they'll search the system for those keywords. If you don't have those words on your resumé, even if those skills are displayed differently, your resumé is likely not to be identified."

Numbers game

Quantify your results

- **"If you've worked on a project and there are quantifiable results, provide the numbers," Steinfeld says. "Employers are into analytics; having an actual measure of your success can really help."**

Don't: Go overboard

"I recently heard an interesting story: There were 10 openings in this company and one person's resumé was identified with every keyword search, though the jobs were completely different. The candidate included keywords for every job, made the text white (so it was disguised) and put the resumé over (that text). They tossed the resumé when they learned of the stunt.

Old is new: Send a fax

"Especially when applying to small organizations, fax your resumé. Most offices still have a machine and — guess what? — it never rings," Steinfeld says. "I've noticed that in my own office, when the fax machine rings, people wonder, What could that be? It could be your resumé. It sounds crazy, but the reality is, I test this out all the time with employers and they say, 'Yeah, if I get a resumé over the fax machine, I'm curious.' Say, 'I also sent this online, but I wanted to make sure it got into your hands.'"

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Teach 'em how Douggie

Gilmour sees playoff promise in Maple Leafs

While the Leafs have spent nine gruesome years out of the playoffs, Toronto legend Doug Gilmour said he believes the playoff-bound roster is capable of making a dent in the Stanley Cup tournament.

"I like the team, I like the way they've built the team," Gilmour said in a recent conversation with Torstar News Service. "It's going to be a fun ride for the guys."

In 1992-93, his second season with the Maple Leafs, Gilmour scored a career-high 127 points and famously took the Leafs to within a Wayne Gretzky hat trick — and an unwhistled high stick — of its first Stanley Cup final since 1967.

Gilmour said once in the playoffs this year's Leafs have a chance turn some heads, much like Toronto did in 1993 in the first round against the heavily-favoured Detroit Red Wings.

"When you start the playoffs, everybody's equal. Everybody's got the same amount of points. You try to tell players going into the playoffs, 'Nobody's going to remember what you did during the season, guys. It's what you're going to do now,'" Gilmour said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Doug Gilmour helped the Leafs reach back-to-back conference finals in 1993 and '94. ALLSPORT FILE

Drama surrounds playoff-bound Leafs

NHL. Trio of top Toronto forwards make waves with first-round matchup with Boston looming

Tyler Bozak leads a group of Leafs skaters at practice on Monday. Bozak left practice after about 10 minutes with an undisclosed injury. Toronto travels to Boston for Game 1 of their first-round series Wednesday night.
COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tyler Bozak hardly practised, Phil Kessel didn't speak and Nazem Kadri crashed the net, literally.

The playoffs haven't started yet, but already there is no shortage of storylines surrounding the Maple Leafs.

Toronto (26-17-5) makes its long-awaited return to the post-season on Wednesday in Boston with coach Randy Carlyle declaring the fifth-seeded Leafs the underdog against the fourth-seeded Bruins.

General manager Dave Nonis, who called the Bruins well-managed, well-coached and incredibly deep, agreed that Boston (28-14-6) enters the series as a favourite.

"I don't think that that means anything," he added. "You can term a team the underdog but you have to play the games."

While both men talked up Boston's qualities, they also like their chances.

Carlyle was more concerned about his team than the Bruins, saying the Leafs have to get back to playing their style of hockey — skating, forechecking, getting out of the defensive zone and relying on their special teams.

Do that and the Leafs are hard to beat.

"We feel we can go into any building and have a chance for success," said Carlyle. "And I don't know if you could say that before."

Added goalie James Reimer: "We know that if we do everything right, then we have a good chance against them."

Not all the pieces may be in place, however.

On the ice, Bozak was the first to the dressing room at the Leafs' training centre Monday.

The centre has missed the last two games with an upper body injury — observers point to a possible shoulder injury from last Wednesday's game in Tampa Bay. Bozak skated alone before his teammates came out and gingerly tried some shots. He left some 10 minutes into the team practice.

Carlyle called him day-to-day. Nonis hoped for the best.

"It's our expectation that he's going to be ready for Wednesday," said the GM.

There were some anxious moments when Kadri, who has taken Bozak's place on the top line, went flying into the goal on a drill. Kadri grimaced as he got up. He continued although he paused to have a trainer slap a bandage near his hip.

Kessel kept some three dozen reporters waiting for 20-plus minutes after practice before one of the team's public relations officials said the winger had declined to speak.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bruins (4) vs. Maple Leafs (5)

Season Series: Bruins 3-1-0. Two big, tough teams collide in what could be a tight battle. Boston, the 2011 Stanley Cup champs, went 2-5-2 down the stretch, including Sunday's 4-2 loss at home to Ottawa, to surrender the Northeast Division lead to Montreal. A difference may be goaltending, where the Leafs will be up against the one they let get away a few years ago in Tuukka Rask against the inexperienced James Reimer. A late push got Toronto into the post-season for the first time since 2004. It will be a big first playoff test for rising star Nazem Kadri.
Pick: Bruins in seven.

Bruins prep for their other Original 6 rival

The trade that landed the Leafs Phil Kessel — and the Bruins draft picks that turned into Tyler Seguin, pictured, and Dougie Hamilton — will be at the top of many minds as the clubs square off in the first round starting Wednesday in Boston. CLAUS ANDERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

Canadian city.

Original Six rival.

Bad blood recently, and dating back to the beginnings of the league.

It's not the Montreal Canadiens that the Bruins are preparing to face in the first round of the NHL playoffs, but Boston players are still counting on a tense and tough series against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

"It's two of the biggest hockey markets going at it," Bruins forward Shawn Thornton said after the team's regular-season finale, a 3-2 loss to Ottawa that left Boston with the No. 4 seed and a matchup with Toronto.

Quoted

"Definitely the town is going to be excited, but I think we will be as well."

Bruins forward Tyler Seguin, a native of Toronto.

"You have two Original Six teams going at it and they haven't been in it for a while, so I know they're going to be pretty jacked up, up there."

The Bruins and Maple Leafs open their best-of-seven first-round playoff series in Boston on Wednesday night.

It's the first playoff meeting of the Original Six rivals since 1974. A lot has happened since then to add energy to the rivalry, notably the trade of Phil Kessel to Toronto for draft picks that became Tyler Seguin and Dougie Hamilton.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 SPORTS

THE HOCKEY NEWS
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The Maple Leafs will play their first playoff games in nine years not simply because James Reimer grabbed the starting goalie job and made it his own, nor because Nazem Kadri enjoyed the breakout season long expected of him. There are a number of keys to Toronto's success this season — and they're the same things the Buds will need to do to win their first-round playoff series starting Wednesday against the Boston Bruins.

5 reasons the Leafs got here

1 Maintain their killer penalty kill

Gritty forward Jay McClement has been instrumental in the Leafs' penalty-killing makeover. ABELIMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

It was no secret heading into this year that the Leafs had to improve their penalty killing efficiency from the NHL's third-worst unit last season. Under head coach Randy Carlyle, they've experienced an almost-complete reversal of fortune and finished this season with the league's second-best penalty kill. A large part of the credit for that goes to centre Jay McClement, who will need to be just as good in the playoffs for Toronto to be as effective with a man in the penalty box.

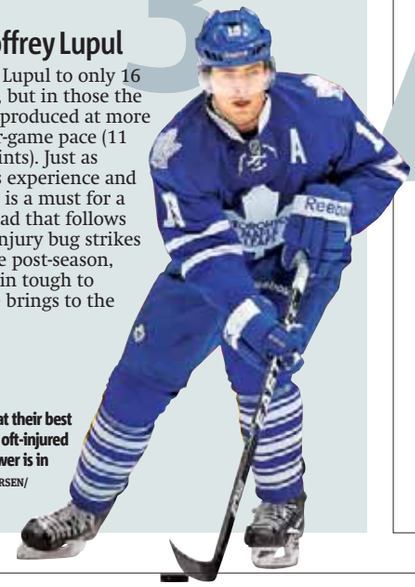
2 Solid even-strength play

Toronto's goals for/against ratio when both teams had five skaters apiece was 1.05 this season — by far their best showing in that category since the 2006-07 campaign. The improvement speaks to a much more structured, patient game plan crafted by Carlyle that should serve them well in the playoffs.

Since being hired in Toronto at the end of last season, coach Randy Carlyle has instilled discipline and purpose into the Leafs' gameplan. DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

3 A healthy Joffrey Lupul

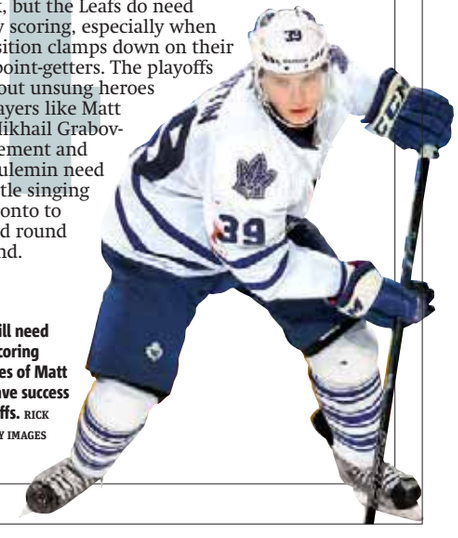
Injuries limited Lupul to only 16 games this year, but in those the star left-winger produced at more than a point-per-game pace (11 goals and 18 points). Just as importantly, his experience and professionalism is a must for a young Leafs squad that follows his lead. If the injury bug strikes him again in the post-season, Toronto will be in tough to replace what he brings to the lineup.



The Leafs have been at their best this season when the oft-injured Joffrey Lupul's firepower is in the lineup. CLAUS ANDERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

4 Some secondary scoring

It doesn't have to be Nazem Kadri who provides offence behind Lupul, Phil Kessel and James van Riemsdyk, but the Leafs do need secondary scoring, especially when the opposition clamps down on their primary point-getters. The playoffs are all about unsung heroes — and players like Matt Frattin, Mikhail Grabovski, McClement and Nikolai Kulemin need to do a little singing to get Toronto to the second round and beyond.



The Leafs will need secondary scoring from the likes of Matt Frattin to have success in the playoffs. RICK STEWART/GETTY IMAGES

5 A little (or a lot) of luck

You read that right. No team wins a Stanley Cup without a fortunate bounce or two. And when you consider the Leafs were one of the league's worst teams in terms of shots-for and shots-against this season, you have to acknowledge they had their share of good luck. That needs to continue throughout their playoff run.

With bounces finally going the Buds' way, Leaf Nation no longer has to live in shame (for now). VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Penguins (1) vs. Islanders (8)

Season Series: Pittsburgh 4-1-0.
Sidney Crosby, who has missed the last 12 games, has done non-contact drills at practice and there is a chance he will join Evgeni Malkin and the rest of the team that dominated the Eastern Conference. The Penguins will be that much more of a favourite if he returns, having added character veterans Jarome Iginla and Brenden Morrow at the trade deadline. The Islanders are in the playoffs for the first time since 2007 and many, including star John Tavares, will make a post-season debut.
Pick: Penguins in four.

Canadiens (2) vs. Senators (7)

Season Series: Both went 2-1-1.
The teams meet for the first time in the playoffs. The Senators are on a high with the recent return of star defenceman Erik Karlsson and big rear-guard Jared Cowen from long-term injuries, not to mention ace goalie Craig Anderson. They went 6-3-0 down the stretch. The Canadiens went into a fog after clinching a playoff spot. But Montreal has three scoring lines and answer Karlsson's skill with P.K. Subban's flash and dash. This should be very close.
Pick: Canadiens in seven.

Capitals (3) vs. Rangers (6)

Season Series: Rangers 2-0-1.
A clash of hot teams that both started the season in a funk. The Capitals went 15-2-2 in their last 19 games, a span that coincided with a scoring binge that gave Alex Ovechkin the Maurice "Rocket" Richard Trophy with 32 goals. The Rangers' season turned around after an April 3 deal that sent Marian Gaborik to Columbus for Derek Brassard and two others, which gave them scoring depth. They went 10-3-1 in April. A key is to stop the Caps' league-best power play (26.8 per cent).
Pick: Capitals in seven.

Who's in net? Schneider still ailing with mystery injury going into Round 1

Vancouver Canucks goaltender Cory Schneider returned to practice Monday, but his status for the first game of the Stanley Cup quarter-finals against the San Jose Sharks remained uncertain.

Schneider was injured April 22 in a win over Chicago, when he played the whole game without any apparent discomfort. He had not practised with the team since then and missed Vancouver's final two regular-season games, but worked out briefly with an assistant coach Sunday.

Coach Alain Vigneault reiterated that Schneider's status remains day to day.

Many hockey observers had speculated that the 27-year-old netminder from Marblehead, Mass., was not injured. But Schneider said his undisclosed ailment prevented him from playing.

"It wasn't really a rest issue," said Schneider. "It was a day-to-day injury, and I had to take some time off."

Schneider said he knows when he was injured against the Blackhawks, but declined to elaborate. He has been making progress in his recovery and hopes to play against the Sharks at some point.

Cory Schneider was injured on April 22 and has not played since.
GETTY IMAGES FILE

Meanwhile, backup Roberto Luongo, who has tried to say and do all the right things all season long since an expected off-season trade did not come through, apologized for ducking reporters after a 7-2 loss in Edmonton on Saturday.

"I was pretty upset and I have to apologize for taking off on you guys," Luongo said.

"It was better for me to sit on the bus than to say some things that I would have regretted." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Blackhawks (1) vs. Wild (8)

Season Series: Chicago 2-0-1.
The Blackhawks started the season 21-0-3 and never let up, going 10-3-2 in April. Jonathan Toews and Patrick Kane had 23 goals each to lead a deep group of forwards, Duncan Keith was a workhorse on a solid defence and Corey Crawford did the job in goal. The Wild had high hopes after signing Zach Parise and Ryan Suter to 13-year $98-million deals on July 4. Both played well and, despite the team fading down the stretch, got them into the playoffs for the first time since 2008 in the last game of the season. There are good players but little depth in Minnesota. The Hawks were second in goals-for (3.1 per game) and gave up the league's least goals (2.02).
Pick: Blackhawks in four.

Ducks (2) vs. Red Wings (7)

Season Series: Detroit 2-0-1.
The question is whether the Ducks faded down the stretch or were on cruise control in the final month. Production dropped for older players like Saku Koivu, Sheldon Souray and Teemu Selanne. But they dominated most of the campaign, with a 49-point season from Ryan Getzlaf and a rebound year from defenceman Francois Beauchemin. The Red Wings spent the season rebuilding their defence after Niklas Lidstrom's retirement and needed a season-ending four-game run to make the playoffs for a 22nd straight year. Big performances from Henrik Zetterberg and Pavel Datsyuk were key and will be again in the post-season.
Pick: Detroit in seven.

Canucks (3) vs. Sharks (6)

Season Series: San Jose 3-0-0.
Getting Kevin Bieksa back from a "body" injury was a relief for the Canucks, although they may be missing rearguard Chris Tanev to start the playoffs. Vancouver wasn't quite as dominant as in recent years, but still has the Sedin twins and the core of the 2011 Stanley Cup finalist squad. A big question is whether Cory Schneider, who was rested with an injury this week, is ready or if Roberto Luongo will have to step up. The veteran Sharks got a little quicker at the trade deadline. They have the edge on special teams with both the power play and penalty kill in the top-10, and a hot goalie in Antti Niemi. But they still need to shake their playoff underachiever label.
Pick: Canucks in seven.

Blues (4) vs. Kings (5)

Season Series: L.A. 3-0-0.
This should be the crash and bang series between two physical teams that play solid defence. And both finished strong — L.A. at 10-4-3 and St. Louis 11-2-0. Brian Elliott has been hot in goal in relief of the injured Jaroslav Halak. The Kings swept the Blues in last year's conference semifinal and have won eight in a row overall against them. A concern for the Kings has been goalie Jonathan Quick, last year's playoff hero who was 38th in save percentage (9.02) this season. But they won the Cup as the eighth seed last year and come back with most of the same lineup looking to be the first repeat champion since Detroit in 1998. They have the edge in playoff experience and scoring.
Pick: L.A. in five.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

The beasts of the East

After a truncated 48-game regular season, the National Hockey League playoffs are about to begin. Here are five Eastern Conference players to watch in the post-season:

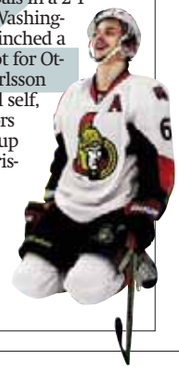
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Evgeni Malkin

Pittsburgh finished first in the East despite injuries to several top players, including Malkin, Sidney Crosby and James Neal. Malkin, who nursed an upper-body injury late in the season, is usually a playoff point machine. He had a whopping 36 points in 24 games during Pittsburgh's run to the Stanley Cup in 2009.

Erik Karlsson

Ottawa's star blue-liner missed 31 games with an Achilles tendon injury but had an immediate impact upon his return. He assisted on both goals in a 2-1 win over Washington that clinched a playoff spot for Ottawa. If Karlsson is his usual self, the Senators may keep up their surprising ways.



James Reimer

The young goalie is a big reason the Maple Leafs broke their playoff drought. He handled the starting job with aplomb this season, despite rumours that Toronto was seeking an upgrade. Reimer's steady play gave the Leafs a much-needed confidence boost and has Toronto primed for some long-awaited playoff hockey.

Alex Ovechkin

After a sluggish start to the season, Ovechkin carried the Capitals to the Southeast Division title. The Capitals have fewer points than some teams below them in the standings but get the No. 3 seed as a division winner. If he continues his scoring pace, Washington could be tough.

P.K. Subban

The young defenceman has helped turn Montreal into contenders again. Subban is averaging nearly a point a game and logs plenty of ice time. He's also not afraid to throw his weight around. Subban is known for the energy and excitement he brings to the Canadiens.

What's up, Doc?

Crosby says he won't play until given green light

Penguins star Sidney Crosby practised Monday but his status remains uncertain for Wednesday's playoff opener against the New York Islanders.

Crosby hasn't played since breaking his jaw a month ago, missing Pittsburgh's final 12 games of the regular season. He underwent dental procedures and was cleared to return to non-contact drills last week. Crosby says he'll see doctors again Tuesday and will not play until he is given clearance.

The Penguins thrived in his absence, going 8-4 without their captain while locking up the top seed in the Eastern Conference.

Crosby still finished tied for third in the NHL in scoring despite missing a quarter of the season. He had 15 goals and 41 assists in 36 games.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Islanders on shore again for post-season action

Mark Streit is a rarity for the New York Islanders. The veteran defenceman is one of the few players who, when given the chance to go anywhere, actually chose to play on Long Island.

Nearly five years after he signed his free-agent contract, Streit is about to wear the team's orange and blue sweater in a playoff game for the first time.

"It's amazing," the Islanders captain said Monday after practice. "It's a great feeling. The past was some rough years, definitely."

The Swiss defenceman had logged three seasons with the Canadiens when he hit the free-agent market in the summer of 2008. Five years later, the move is finally paying off with a cast of players that weren't around when he arrived.

With young superstar John Tavares leading the way and veteran Evgeni Nabokov in goal, the Islanders are in the playoffs for the first time since 2007.

"The future is bright," Streit said. "There are a lot of young guys on the team and there is a veteran presence, as well, so it's a good mix. The future in Brooklyn looks great, as well."

The Islanders (24-17-7) know they have nothing to lose once their first-round series against the Penguins begins Wednesday in Pittsburgh. If they can win at least one of the first two games on the road, they will return to what will surely be a raucous Nassau Coliseum for a Game 3 matinee on Sunday.

"They are the best team in the Eastern Conference and it's a big challenge for us, but we beat them, too, this year," Streit said. "In sports, nothing is impossible. They are the big favourite, but it starts at 0-0 and we want to give them a good series."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"We are asking our guys to be relaxed and focused. That's all I am asking them to do."

Islanders coach Jack Capuano with his team heading into a first-round series vs. the Penguins

Islanders forward John Tavares, right, battles Brandon Sutter of the Penguins for the puck on Feb. 5 in Uniondale, N.Y. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Jays not pushing panic button yet

April fools? Toronto GM Anthopoulos insists his team will rebound from woeful start

Toronto Blue Jays third baseman Brett Lawrie reacts after his team's 7-0 loss to the Chicago White Sox on April 17. RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

No team in the last 10 seasons has started as poorly as the Blue Jays have this year and still made the playoffs.

Yet GM Alex Anthopoulos is confident his club can turn its slow start around and contend come September.

"There's no question — we'll go on a run," he said Sunday in New York before his club's fourth straight loss. "We'll get hot and everyone is going to get excited again."

It's still early, but if the Jays hope to turn their season around they better do it fast. They already are at risk of digging themselves a hole from which it will be too difficult to climb.

With Sunday's loss to the Yankees, their 17th of the season and 10th in their last 13 games, the Jays tied the record for the second-worst April in franchise history.

If they lose on Tuesday against the red-hot Boston Red Sox, they will join Carlos Tosca's 2003 version for the worst opening month in Jays' history.

More discouraging to the club's playoff hopes is the lack of precedent for turning around an April as bad as theirs. Five teams from the past 10 years have reached the post-season after losing 15 games in the first month. None, however, have done so after losing more than that, nor after falling eight games below .500 as the Jays have. Major League Baseball's expanded playoff format has only been around for one season, though, so perhaps the Jays can break the trend.

As R.A. Dickey pointed out on Sunday, the good news is it has only been one month and there are another five to go. In order for the Jays to reach 93 wins — last year's benchmark for the second AL wild-card — they will have to go 84-52 in the remaining 136 games. Difficult but certainly not impossible.

Anthopoulos is right to point out that many of the Jays' wonky numbers will even out in time, and that will lead to more wins. Twenty-six games is a tiny sample from which to make predictions or draw conclusions. At the same time, after a disastrous 1-6 road trip, a sense of urgency has quickly grown. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Bird droppings

Why the Blue Jays struggle:

- **Poor Pitching.** Combined, R.A. Dickey, Brandon Morrow, Mark Buerhle, Josh Johnson and J.A. Happ have posted a horrid 5.26 ERA, an MLB 4th-worst.
- **Weak Offence.** The loss of Jose Reyes has impacted Toronto's ability to get runners on base. Many of their 33 home runs have been solo shots.
- **Sloppy Defence.** Tied for second worst in the AL with 16 errors and a sad league-leading 10 throwing errors have hurt bad.

NHL

Avs claim top prize in draft lottery

The Colorado Avalanche have won the NHL draft lottery.

The Florida Panthers own the second pick for June's draft, while the Tampa Bay Lightning have the third selection.

Portland Winterhawks defenceman Seth Jones is the No. 1-ranked North American skater according to the NHL Central Scouting Bureau.

The lottery adopted a different format this year, with all of the 14 non-playoff teams having a shot at the first-overall pick.

In previous years, the lottery-winning team could move up no more than four spots in the draft order. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Tebow's time is up

Tim Tebow was waived by the Jets on Monday, the end of an unsuccessful one-season experiment in New York.

Acquired from the Broncos in March 2012, Tebow arrived at the Jets' practice facility on Monday and was told he had been cut. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE QUARTER-FINALS

(Best-of-7; All Times Eastern)

EASTERN CONFERENCE

MIAMI (1) VS MILWAUKEE (8)
(Miami wins series 4-0)
Sunday's result
Miami 88 Milwaukee 77
NEW YORK (2) VS BOSTON (7)
(New York Leads 3-1)
Wednesday's game
Boston at New York, TBA
INDIANA (3) VS ATLANTA (6)
(Indiana leads series 2-1)
Monday's result
Indiana at Atlanta
BROOKLYN (4) VS CHICAGO (5)
(Chicago leads series 3-1)
Monday's result
Chicago at Brooklyn

WESTERN CONFERENCE

OKLAHOMA CITY (1) VS HOUSTON (8)
(Oklahoma City leads series 3-0)
Monday's result
Oklahoma City at Houston
SAN ANTONIO (1) VS L.A. LAKERS (7)
(San Antonio wins series 4-0)
Sunday's result
San Antonio 103 L.A. Lakers 82
DENVER (3) VS GOLDEN STATE (6)
(Golden State leads series 3-1)
Sunday's result
Golden State 115, Denver 101
L.A. CLIPPERS (4) VS MEMPHIS (5)
(Tie 2-2)
Tuesday's game
Memphis at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

NHL

STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE QUARTER-FINALS

(Best-of-7)

EASTERN CONFERENCE
PITTSBURGH (1) VS. N.Y. ISLANDERS (8)
Wednesday's game
NY Islanders at Pittsburgh, 7:30 p.m.
Friday's game
NY Islanders at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.
MONTREAL (2) VS. OTTAWA (7)
Thursday's game
Ottawa at Montreal, 7 p.m.
Friday's game
Ottawa at Montreal, 7 p.m.
WASHINGTON (3) VS. N.Y. RANGERS (6)
Thursday's game
NY Rangers at Washington, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday's game
NY Rangers at Washington, 12:30 p.m.
BOSTON (4) VS. TORONTO (5)
Wednesday's game
Toronto at Boston, 7 p.m.
Saturday's game
Toronto at Boston, 7 p.m.
WESTERN CONFERENCE
CHICAGO (1) VS. MINNESOTA (8)
Tuesday's game
Minnesota at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Friday's game
Minnesota at Chicago, 9:30 p.m.
ANAHEIM (2) VS. DETROIT (7)
Tuesday's game
Detroit at Anaheim, 10:30 p.m.
Thursday's game
Detroit at Anaheim, 10 p.m.
VANCOUVER (3) VS. SAN JOSE (6)
Wednesday's game
San Jose at Vancouver, 10:30 p.m.
Friday's game
San Jose at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
ST. LOUIS (4) VS. LOS ANGELES (5)
Tuesday's game
Los Angeles at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Thursday's game
Los Angeles at St. Louis, 9:30 p.m.
x — played only if necessary.

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	18	7	.720	—
New York	15	9	.625	2½
Baltimore	15	10	.600	3
Tampa Bay	12	13	.480	6
Toronto	9	17	.346	9½

CENTRAL DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Kansas City	13	9	.591	—
Detroit	13	10	.565	½
Minnesota	11	10	.524	1½
Chicago	10	14	.417	4
Cleveland	9	13	.409	4

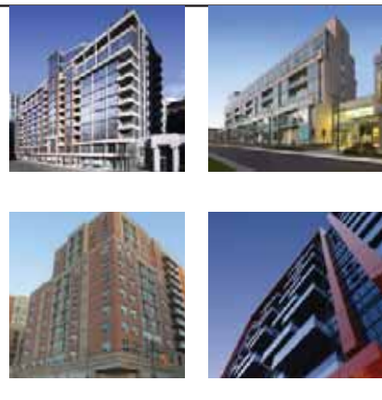
WEST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	16	9	.640	—
Oakland	14	12	.538	2½
Seattle	11	16	.407	6
Los Angeles	9	15	.375	6½
Houston	7	18	.280	9

Monday's results
Houston at N.Y. Yankees
Minnesota at Detroit
Cleveland at Kansas City
L.A. Angels at Oakland
Baltimore at Seattle
Tuesday's games
All times Eastern
Houston (Humber 0-5) at N.Y. Yankees (Kuroda 3-1), 7:05 p.m.
Minnesota (Worley 0-3) at Detroit (Verlander 2-2), 7:05 p.m.
Boston (Lester 4-0) at Toronto (Morrow 0-2), 7:07 p.m.
Philadelphia (Halladay 2-2) at Cleveland (McAllister 1-3), 7:10 p.m.
Chicago White Sox (Quintana 2-0) at Texas (Darvish 4-1), 8:05 p.m.
Tampa Bay (Cobb 3-1) at Kansas City (Shields 1-2), 8:10 p.m.
L.A. Angels (Richards 1-1) at Oakland (Parker 0-4), 10:05 p.m.
Baltimore (Hammel 3-1) at Seattle (Maurer 2-3), 10:10 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Monday's results
Washington at Atlanta
N.Y. Mets at Miami
San Diego at Chicago Cubs
Pittsburgh at Milwaukee
Cincinnati at St. Louis
San Francisco at Arizona
Colorado at L.A. Dodgersm



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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Sometimes it is right to be selfish and this is one such occasion. Put your own needs first today and don't worry that some people might not like it. What matters is that your efforts are for your benefit.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Make an effort to see the good in people rather than the bad today. There is a piece of the divine spark in every human being, though sometimes you have to dig deep to find it.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You may be the life of the party most of the time, but you need your private moments too and you definitely need some time and space to yourself today. Keep in touch with the inner you, the real you.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Look at your life as it is, think of your life as you want it to be then start working on things that will take you from here to there by the straightest line and in the quickest time.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Don't follow the herd. Some people like their lives to be predictable and boring but that isn't for you. You're a Leo and Leos were born to be creators — and lovers too.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't worry about how you are going to reach your long-term goals. Cosmic activity in the sympathetic sign of Taurus is guiding you in the right direction and protecting every step you make. Believe it.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Your mind is full of big ideas at the moment but do you have the necessary talent to do something with them? Of course you do. Select one major aim for the month of May and work on it every single day.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may be tempted to go back on something you decided to do because the going is tougher than you expected but that would be a mistake. The toughest part will be followed by the easiest part.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Just because you are working harder than ever does not mean you will accomplish more. In fact, if the planets are to be believed, you are on the point of exhausting yourself for no good reason.

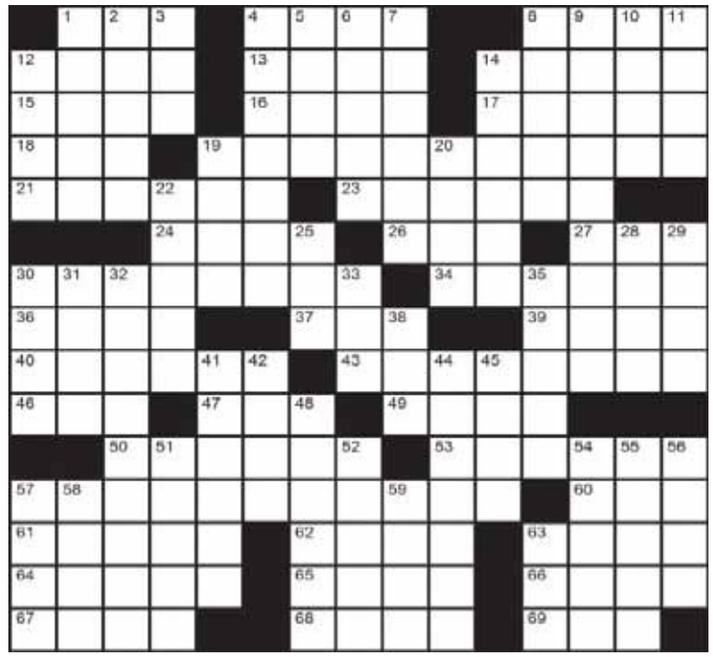
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Everyone needs rules to live by but that does not mean you have to follow someone else's rules, especially if they don't feel right to you. Make your own rules today and be brave enough to live by them.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You feel a bit out of touch at the moment. The prevailing mood among your friends is different to what you feel. So what? The world is big enough for all sorts of feelings.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Try not to complicate matters today. There are no hidden meanings or motives in what other people say and do, so stop worrying. SALLY ROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

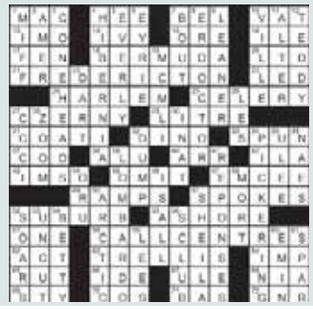
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Crash Test Dummies song, when repeated
4. "Phooey!" [pl.]
8. House: Spanish
12. Frolic
13. Parkay, for one
14. Type of mil. mission
15. Once, poetically
16. Actor, __ Patrick Harris
17. Brit singer Mr. John
18. Univ. web address word, sometimes
19. Midnight, April 30th: 2 wds.
21. Bow
23. "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" specialty
24. Medium, on a label
26. Toronto Raptors org.
27. Medit. locale
30. Canadian History: Farmer of New France
34. Rustling sounding
36. Old†Testament book after Genesis, for short
37. Figure skater Ms. Babilonia
39. Ancient portico
40. Sources of strength
43. Sherlock Holmes sidekick: 2 wds.
46. Mode's intro: 2 wds.
47. 'Human' suffix
49. New Zealand fruit
50. Canadian ice dancing champs, Tessa __ & Scott Moir
53. Tortilla treats
57. "The Kids in the Hall" character: 2 wds.
60. Li'l baseball official
61. WWII Riveter
62. Prefix with 'globin'
63. Prefix to 'dextrous'
64. Vows-exchanging spot
65. From square one
66. Filth
67. "__ Girls" (2004)
68. Mr. von Sydow's
69. 'Conc' completer (Acknowledge defeat).

Down
1. Tuesday: French
2. Canadian fast food chain: 2 wds.
3. Shopping estab.
4. Western series Ottawa-born actor Lorne Greene starred on
5. Author Mr. Haley
6. Swiss character in literature
7. Seriously sincere
8. Yo-Yo Ma's instrument
9. Protest participants, perhaps
10. Coming __ to a theatre near you...
11. Ms. Hathaway
12. Scornful look
14. Sketch again
19. "Hop __ __!" (Move!)
20. Some police alerts, for short
22. Where the hit song (usually) wasn't, __ __
25. 'Differ' suffix
28. "Vamoose!"
29. Meg of movies
30. "__ _ Rebel" by The Crystals
31. Botanical leaf-to-stem angle
32. Cape __, Nfld.
33. Smidgen
35. 'Real' suffix
38. Bother
41. Employee
42. Locale
44. Microsoft operating system
45. Out
48. Lena of HBO's "Girls"
51. 'Beaut' suffix
52. Nina Dobrev's "The Vampire Diaries" dual role, __/Katherine
54. Sauna-like weather
55. Darker-to-lighter highlights
56. BBQ rod
57. Study hard
58. Courtney Love band
59. Charge card, commonly
63. 'Block' suffix

Yesterday's Crossword



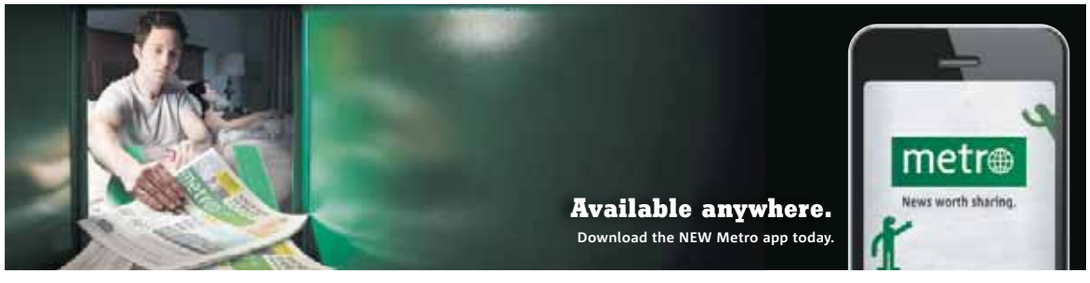
Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

8	5		7				1	3
3	6		1		4	2		
		7			5			8
5						6	2	
6			2		1			9
	9	1						5
7			5			1		
		8	4		2		7	6
9	2				7		8	4

Yesterday's Sudoku

7	8	5	6	2	1	3	9	4
6	9	3	8	5	4	7	2	1
4	2	1	9	7	3	6	8	5
8	1	6	4	3	9	2	5	7
2	3	7	1	8	5	4	6	9
9	5	4	7	6	2	1	3	8
1	4	2	3	9	8	5	7	6
5	7	8	2	1	6	9	4	3
3	6	9	5	4	7	8	1	2



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